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ABSTRACT

In response to the need for dynamic foreign language materials with a communicative focus, this report addresses the relationship between learner characteristics and success in language learning. It suggests that a self-pacing individualized option should be available to students to deal with unique problems. The problems may be dealt with by identifying the range of possible causes of the learning difficulty and by suggesting specific remedial activities that correspond directly to that difficulty. With this as the aim, the report discusses cognitive styles and learning strategies, labeling the learning problem, some diagnostic instruments and procedures for determining sources of difficulty, and classroom activities for responding to learner needs. Among these activities are: (1) the analysis of samples of the language with attention to linguistic and semantic units; (2) the synthesis of elements of the language to create an organized whole; (3) the paraphrasing, expansion, or transformation of ideas; (4) the analysis and synthesis of information to make inferences about missing cues or conclusions; and (5) the expansion of capacities for remembering words, phrases, sentences, grammatical features, and ideas in the foreign language. Sample exercises are provided in French, Spanish, and German. (JK)

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LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION: THEORY AND PRACTICE

36

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Helping Learners Succeed: Activities for the Foreign Language Classroom

Alice C. Omaggio

FL 012 592

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German examples were contributed by Richard Karnes of the University of New Mexico, and Spanish examples by Anna Sandoval of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Sonia Kundert drew the illustration.

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Introduction

One of the primary concerns of foreign language educators in recent years has been the development of a curriculum that is responsive to the interests and needs of a wide variety of students. New curricular options and outreach courses are being offered in many schools, colleges, and universities in an attempt to appeal to individuals who might not otherwise elect foreign languages. More dynamic materials with a communicative focus are being designed to capture the interest of students bored with "traditional" approaches that emphasize grammar, translation, and manipulation of language forms, often at the expense of meaning. The concern for relevance is reflected in methodological innovations and new ideas for testing real-world communication skills. Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of the trend toward responsive curricula is the interest in the cognitive styles, learning strategies, and personality characteristics of individual learners. Research into the relationship between learner characteristics and success in language learning is certain to have an important impact on instruction in the coming years.

This is an exciting and creative time for the foreign language profession. Yet, despite the encouraging advances of the past few years, we are faced with a pedagogical problem that seems to defy solution. "It is a problem most keenly felt at the basic level of the educational process, namely, how to cope with individual failure" (Meeker 1976, p. 6). Most of us have experienced the frustration of watching a student with adequate intelligence fail to learn. Sometimes "failure" is exhibited on a small scale--one student cannot seem to master a particular concept or set of concepts despite repeated attempts to reach him or her; another learner might have consistent difficulties in one particular skill area but do well in all the others. Failure on a larger scale is even more frustrating and can often occur when a student becomes "lost" early in the instructional sequence and cannot regain enough control of the course content to pass at the end of the semester. Unless a self-pacing individualized option is available to such students, the foreign language-learning experience quite often represents a useless struggle to be avoided at all costs in the future.

This failure to learn, be it limited or extensive, is painful for both students and teachers, especially when the student is obviously trying to improve. In recent years, much of our profession's energy has been devoted to finding out what makes learners succeed. What makes the good language learner good? What cognitive styles, learning strategies, and personality

characteristics seem to be associated with successful learning experiences? Why do some students fail, when others of equal or lesser measured intelligence do well? The answers to these questions are still somewhat elusive. Despite an increased interest in research into cognitive styles and learner characteristics as they relate to foreign language learning, we still have not found enough answers to ensure a successful foreign language-learning experience for everyone.

One solution to individual learner problems seems to lie in "responsive" teaching. Various approaches have been suggested for responding to the individual student's needs. First, one can try to identify the student's preferred general cognitive style or strategy (such as auditory or visual orientation) and design learning activities that accommodate that style in all skill areas. Reinert's ELSIE (Edmonds Learning Style Identification Exercise) is one example of this approach. Second, the structure of the learning environment can be altered to accommodate the preferences or styles of the students. (For example, some students function best in a structured environment, while others prefer an unstructured classroom setting.) Hunt's paragraph completion method seeks to characterize learners in terms of their conceptual maturity and determine what learning environments are most compatible. The social structure of the classroom can also be altered by providing opportunities for small-group or large-group instruction, depending on learner preferences. One learning style theorist has even suggested that environmental accommodations should include such things as well-lit and dimly lit areas, differing temperature zones, a variety of seating arrangements, opportunities for individual study and self-pacing, audiovisual resource centers, space and materials for kinesthetic activities, and provision of food for students who need an occasional snack to work effectively (Lepke 1978).

All the adaptive approaches described above have a common thread: they attempt to (1) label the learner in terms of a generalized cognitive style or preference that applies to a wide range of learning tasks and situations and (2) manipulate the environment accordingly. The danger in such an approach is that it tends to oversimplify the situation. Not everyone has a dominant cognitive style. It is likely that some students employ different learning strategies as task demands change. The learner who uses inferencing skills to advantage while doing a reading task may be easily frustrated by unknown elements in a listening passage. A student who tends to be impulsive while doing multiple-choice items may be very reflective in a writing task.

It is quite probable that the answer to the question "Why do students fail?" is that there is no single answer. Any individual case of learning failure is most probably attributable to several more or less interrelated causes. It seems reasonable,

then, that in order to help students learn more effectively, we need to label the learning problem rather than the learner. We need to identify a range of possible causes of the learning difficulty and suggest specific remedial activities that correspond directly to it. The following discussion will describe such an approach.

Cognitive Styles and Learning Strategies: A Range of Possible Causes

Some of the more common sources of learning problems among foreign language students can be extrapolated from the growing base of research on cognitive styles and learning strategies. The terms "cognitive style," "conceptual style," "learning style," and "learning strategy" have been widely used in educational contexts in recent years by both researchers and practitioners interested in characterizing individual differences more clearly. The term "cognitive style," first used in studies of perceptual traits in the 1950s, described aspects of individual perceptual differences thought to be independent of intelligence and other abilities. Since then, the term has evolved to include a much broader range of intellectual activity, as the variety and proliferation of definitions of the concept illustrate. Most theorists agree that cognitive styles represent typical modes of perceiving, thinking, remembering, and problem solving that are partly conscious strategies and partly unconscious habits.

Vaguely synonymous with "cognitive style" are such terms as "learning style," "conceptual style," "cognitive strategy," "learning strategy," "mode of information processing," and "cognitive control principle." Some researchers tend to distinguish "style" from "strategy," however, by the pervasiveness and assumed permanency of the characteristics: in their view, a "style" seems to be a more permanent component of an individual's personality, while a "strategy" is seen as a more superficial reaction to a learning situation that is amenable to change (Abraham 1978, pp. 3-4).

Cognitive styles and strategies, in turn, are distinguished by many theorists from "intelligence" and "ability." Messick (in Abraham) points out that abilities measure maximal performance, whereas cognitive style characterizes typical performance. Abilities are unipolar, in that they vary from none to a lot; cognitive styles, on the other hand, are bipolar, ranging from one extreme of one quality to an extreme of a contrasting quality. Abilities are value-laden, in that having more ability is better than having less; cognitive styles, by contrast, are "value-differentiated," in that sometimes one style is more effective in performing a given task, but less useful in doing something else. It is this last aspect of cognitive style that is of particular interest in diagnosing learner problems. Dif-

ficulties in learning and functioning in the foreign language may be associated with extremes along one or more cognitive style dimensions, resulting in the use of a strategy that is inappropriate or inefficient for the particular task at hand.

Before we can diagnose learning problems, then, we need to review those dimensions of cognitive style that seem most relevant to the learning of a second language. The bipolar dimensions described below are synthesized from several models of cognitive style.[1] Because their characteristics sometimes overlap, they should not be considered as totally independent or mutually exclusive sets, but rather as alternative ways of characterizing cognitive behavior.

Field Independence-Field Dependence

The field-independent/field-dependent dimension of cognitive style, first isolated and labeled by Witkin and his colleagues to characterize perceptual behavior, involves an analytical versus a global way of perceiving. Field-independent individuals tend to perceive individual items as discrete from backgrounds and can overcome the influence of embedding contexts. Research evidence indicates that field independence correlates substantially with measures of intelligence that require analytical skills: persons who are field independent perform better on tests that involve separating individual parts from an organized whole or rearranging parts to make a whole. In linguistic tasks, field-independent learners have been shown to be able to focus on language stimuli relevant to the learning task and disregard inappropriate ones.

Field dependence or field sensitivity, by contrast, is characterized by a more global approach to the task at hand. Guided by the existing organization of a whole context, field-dependent individuals find it difficult to overcome the influence of a surrounding field and often cannot separate an item from its context. The field-sensitive language learner may lack focusing skills and can therefore be distracted easily by irrelevant or extraneous linguistic stimuli.

Breadth of Categorization

This style dimension reflects the individual's tendency to place an item into a broad category or a narrow category. Choosing the broad category minimizes the risk of excluding items that belong, whereas choosing the narrow category minimizes the risk of including items that do not belong.

Leveling-Sharpening

Somewhat related to breadth of categorization is the leveling-sharpening dimension of cognitive style. This model

accounts for individual variation in the way information is assimilated in memory. Levelers tend to blur similar memories, assimilating new information into previous categories; sharpeners tend to differentiate new information from old, sometimes making greater distinctions among stimuli or events than are actually warranted.

Preception-Reception

The leveling-sharpening tendency is, in turn, similar to the preceptive-receptive dimension of cognitive style. A person who is preceptive looks for patterns; he or she is inclined to assimilate new information into previously held concepts or "precepts," whereas the receptive individual tends to take in details as they are, without considering first the way they "fit" into preconceived notions or categories.

Impulsivenesa-Reflectiveness (Conceptual Tempo)

This style dimension involves the speed with which individuals make decisions in solving a problem. Impulsive people tend to make quick decisions, offering the first answer that occurs to them, even though they may often be wrong. They select hypotheses quickly without considering all the components of the problem. Reflective individuals tend to give more deliberate, slower responses and ponder various possibilities or hypotheses before deciding.

Risk Taking-Caution

An individual's tendency to be reflective rather than impulsive is somewhat like the inclination to be cautious rather than to take risks. Risk taking is characterized by the willingness to take a chance even when the odds are poor or there are a lot of unknowns in the situation. Cautious individuals, by contrast, are reluctant to take a chance unless the probability of their being right is very high. Reflective individuals will probably proceed cautiously in problem-solving situations, while impulsive people are more likely to take risks.

Systematicness

The tendency to solve a problem or complete a task by developing a clear procedure or systematic plan contrasts with the inclination to develop ideas "freely" and skip from the part to the whole in an intuitive fashion. Systematic individuals may be somewhat reflective as they form hypotheses or complete a task, whereas intuitive learners may be more impulsive, choosing first one idea and then abandoning it if it doesn't work.

Tolerance of Ambiguity

Persons who can tolerate ambiguity can deal effectively with unknown elements in a given situation and can handle uncertainty comfortably. They tend to use inferencing strategies to deal with unknown factors in a task. Those individuals who are intolerant of ambiguity may give up quickly when a task involves too many unknowns or presents difficulties. A person who cannot handle ambiguity is likely to have trouble forming hypotheses, taking risks, and making inferences.

Flexibility-Inflexibility

Flexible individuals are able to find alternative solutions to a problem. They tend to be good at divergent thinking tasks where the production of a variety or a large quantity of answers is required. Inflexible individuals are unwilling to abandon a particular solution to a problem and consider other possibilities. They may be what Guilford calls "convergent thinkers," tending to remain within the strict limitations of a task or focus on the production of a single correct answer.

Labeling the Learning Problem

Some students have problems learning second languages because of attitudinal or situational factors; they may be unmotivated for a variety of reasons and simply refuse to learn, or they may be unable or unwilling to invest the study time necessary for significant learning to take place. If, however, certain students want to learn, are investing time in independent study, and are still experiencing difficulties, it is likely that they are using inappropriate or inefficient strategies or sets of strategies that can be corrected if they are pinpointed for them.

Many of the learner problems encountered in the foreign language classroom may be associated with extremes along one or more cognitive style dimensions. A particular "visible symptom" (such as a lack of fluency, failure to attend to detail, or a lack of organization) may be attributable to one or several sources. The first step in labeling the learning problem is to limit the possible sources of the difficulty. Once the teacher has done this, he or she has come a long way toward knowing how to give the students the specific help they need.

Some common sources of difficulty have been synthesized from existing research on cognitive styles and learning strategies, as well as studies on the good language learner, and are described below.

Poor Memory

Students cannot remember information long enough to integrate the different elements of a spoken or written message into a meaningful and coherent whole. Research on reading has shown that memory span among beginning students of a foreign language is effectively shortened because of a lack of training with the new code and the unfamiliarity of the material (Yorio 1971, pp. 107-15). We can expect, therefore, that many learners will exhibit symptoms of poor memory in the early stages of acquisition.

Short-term memory difficulties may show up, for example, in dictations when students leave large gaps or miss entire sentences. When asked to summarize a reading or listening passage, students whose memory needs strengthening may write very skimpy or inaccurate résumés. In addition, they have trouble answering questions on a given passage. Students may also have difficulty recalling specific vocabulary, verb endings, noun markers, correct spellings, and the like. Consequently, their written production may be riddled with minor errors, lack fluency, and tend to be fairly brief.

Lack of Flexibility

A lack of flexibility might also result in a lack of fluency, even if the student's memory is quite good. Students hesitate and stumble over words because they are not able to find alternative means of expression. The performance of such students is often characterized by pauses in speech and by skimpy or brief compositions. They may be engaging most of the time in convergent thinking and tend to focus on the production of a single right answer. They have trouble with creative tasks or assignments that require lengthy or varied output.

Excessive Impulsiveness

When learners react impulsively, they tend to jump into a task without giving adequate consideration to its various components. They are not attentive to detail and are not overly concerned with the adequacy or accuracy of their response. They may be extremely fluent but tend to make a great many errors. When asked to do tasks requiring inferencing skills, such as cloze passages, completion exercises, and the like, they tend to make random (and inaccurate) guesses based on impulse rather than thoughtful analysis. In written and oral assignments, impulsiveness may result in a lack of organization. Students may tend to approach such assignments in an unsystematic and "freewheeling" fashion.

Because students who react impulsively tend to give the first answer that comes to mind, they may be what Krashen calls

"monitor under-users": that is, they do not apply what they know about the formal structure of the language to their output and subsequently make frequent errors.

Excessive Reflectiveness/Caution

When learners are too reflective they tend to pay too much attention to detail and discriminate so finely that they lose the general thread of a listening or reading passage. They may lack synthesizing skills because they are concentrating too much on the parts of the message. They tend to be very cautious because they are overly concerned with the adequacy or accuracy of their responses. Because they don't like to take risks, they are slow at decision making and often prefer to say nothing rather than make an inaccurate guess. They may be what Krashen calls "monitor over-users," reflecting too much about the accuracy of an answer so that their communicative ability and/or fluency is hampered.

Lack of Systematicness/Organization

Students who react too intuitively when doing certain language tasks may lack important organization skills. They may produce rambling answers and disorganized thoughts in compositions. Such students may also have poor study skills and may fail to correct errors that have been explained previously, because they do not attend to or remember them. They may also have difficulty seeing grammatical patterns and are poor at forming hypotheses about the systematic structure and functioning of the language.

Field Dependence

Students who exhibit field dependence in doing certain tasks may lack analytical skills and have difficulty seeing patterns within linguistic stimuli. They may also lack focusing skills and are too easily distracted by irrelevant details. Because they cannot distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, they tend to be random and inaccurate guessers. In doing grammatical tasks, they may become confused by linguistic forms in proximity to the ones on which the activity focuses and select the wrong verb ending, tense, adjective ending, and the like. Often their confusion in attending to inappropriate cues in a listening or reading passage impairs their ability to derive meaning from that passage. They may become easily frustrated by extraneous information or unknown elements and are likely to make the task more complex than necessary.

Leveling/Categorizing Too Broadly

When students categorize too broadly, they have difficulty making pertinent distinctions between syntactic or semantic categories. They may blur similar words, verb endings, determiners, and the like, in their minds and make frequent errors in spelling or in the choice of appropriate linguistic forms. For some students, for example, all verbs are in the infinitive, all adjectives are masculine singular, and all articles are definite articles. These students tend to overgeneralize, making rules about the second language that subsume many examples.

Sharpening/Categorizing Too Narrowly

Students who tend to categorize too narrowly are overly analytical and discriminate too finely. They want to create a rule for every example, a strategy that prevents them from making necessary and accurate generalizations. They may be intolerant of ambiguity where grammatical rules are concerned and become easily frustrated when a cut-and-dried rule is unavailable. Because they are often lost in detail, they may have trouble synthesizing information and forming concepts.

Low Tolerance of Ambiguity

When students show a low tolerance of ambiguity, they give up quickly whenever the task presents difficulty, doubt, or ambiguity. They cannot hypothesize well and do not like to take risks. Because they give up easily, they are not good guessers and may perform poorly on tasks requiring inferencing skills.

Some Diagnostic Instruments and Procedures

What diagnostic instruments and/or procedures are available to help teachers determine with some degree of confidence which source or sources of learning difficulty are responsible for a particular student's problem? Those measures and techniques currently available can be described within the following subcategories: (1) commercially available instruments used in cognitive style research, (2) learning style inventories used in foreign language research, (3) error charts, (4) interview techniques, and (5) observation.

Instruments Used in Cognitive Style Research

The instruments used in much of the cognitive style research up until now probably have little practical value for the individual classroom teacher, but it may be of interest to review a few of them here. Perhaps adaptations of these measures will be designed for foreign language learning contexts in the near future.

There are three instruments that have been typically used to measure field dependence-independence. Because this cognitive style dimension grew from perceptual research, tests to characterize individuals along this dimension have been, to date, exclusively perceptual.

. The Body Adjustment Test. A person is required to adjust a tilted chair in a tilted room to the true vertical.

. The Rod and Frame Test. The subject in a darkened room adjusts a luminous rod within a luminous frame to the true vertical.

. The Embedded Figures Test. The subject locates simple figures in a set of complex geometric patterns. (A variant of this task is the Hidden Figures Test.)

Obviously, only a paper-and-pencil test such as the Embedded Figures Test could conceivably be used on a wide scale by classroom teachers. Although researchers maintain that results on these perceptual tasks characterize people's cognitive style in other cognitive and personality dimensions, it would be valuable to have at some future date an analogical test of field dependence/independence in either a verbal or symbolic mode, either of which would be a more direct measure of this characteristic in language-learning tasks. The development of such an instrument would be useful to researchers interested in the relationship of this type of cognitive style to language learning and in helping teachers diagnose student problems.

Pettigrew's Paper-and-Pencil Questionnaire is one of the most widely used procedures for assessing breadth of categorization. Items typically specify the average value for a specific category (such as amount of annual rainfall, size of familiar objects, etc.) and the subject's task is to determine the most extreme members of each category from a set of multiple-choice alternatives. Broad categorizers will tend to widen the range of values, whereas narrow categorizers will suggest a more limited range. Unlike the tests of field dependence/independence, this test of cognitive style is given in a verbal rather than a perceptual mode.

The most well known test of impulsiveness versus reflectiveness or "conceptual tempo" is the Matching Familiar Figures procedure. The subject must choose a matching figure for a standard stimulus from among six very similar variants, one of which is identical to the stimulus itself. The speed and accuracy with which the person responds are the two variables observed.

A test of cognitive flexibility is the Stroop Color-Word Interference Test. One of the subtasks requires the subject to name colors in an interference situation: the names of colors are printed on a card, but each color is printed in an ink of a different color (e.g., the word RED is printed in green, blue, yellow, or orange ink, but never in red ink). The speed with which a person correctly names the colors (disregarding the ink

color) indicates his or her susceptibility to interference or conflict in the stimulus. A flexible person can overcome the influence of the ink color when naming the color.

Learning Style Inventories

Many of the learning style and cognitive style inventories that have been described recently in foreign language pedagogical contexts are inappropriate for our purposes because they tend to label the learner in terms of one or several dominant learning styles and preferences and do not focus on specific difficulties associated with discrete tasks or task types.[2] One possible exception is Papalia's Individual Differences Inventory (Papalia and Zampogna 1977), which may prove very helpful in guiding the teacher's analysis of an individual's behavior when performing certain classroom tasks. Some of the broad classificatory questions that could be adapted to a diagnostic approach include those summarized by Lepke (1978) and listed below. The teacher assesses a learner's characteristics on a five-point likert-type scale (such as the one on pp. 12-13), measuring frequency of occurrence from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently). The questions in parentheses are suggested to relate Papalia's inventory questions to the sources of difficulty discussed earlier in this paper.

. Is the student's thinking guided predominantly by inductive or deductive principles? (Is he systematic or intuitive?)
. Does he contribute novel ideas or propose alternative routes to be explored? (Is he flexible or inflexible? A divergent or convergent thinker?)
. Is he prone to seek chiaroscuro answers to complex problems? How quickly does he get confused and reach for the easy way out? (Is he tolerant of ambiguity? Impulsive or reflective? Systematic or intuitive?)
. What about the quality of his homework? Is it well executed and submitted on time? (Is the student attentive or inattentive to detail? Organized or disorganized?)

A comprehensive list of questions such as these can serve as a valuable guideline in diagnosing a learner's problem more accurately. Many of the questions that could be included in such an inventory are implicit in the descriptions of learner problems in the previous section of this paper. A sample list derived from those categories is provided in Figure 1. The list of questions is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, it represents question types that would be useful.

When the inventory is completed, the teacher can pinpoint the sources of difficulty by referring back to the descriptions of learner problems and matching the inventory results to them.

Fig. 1. Diagnostic Inventory

Rank the student's characteristic behavior from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently) for each of the questions below.

Does the student...

1. have trouble remembering syntactic and/or semantic information in the foreign language?	1 2 3 4 5
2. leave large gaps in dictations?	1 2 3 4 5
3. write skimpy or inaccurate résumés of listening or reading passages in the foreign language?	1 2 3 4 5
4. exhibit a lack of fluency when answering questions or speaking on a topic in the foreign language?	1 2 3 4 5
5. have trouble with creative tasks?	1 2 3 4 5
6. write skimpy or brief compositions in the foreign language?	1 2 3 4 5
7. tend to answer questions impulsively, giving quick but often inaccurate answers?	1 2 3 4 5
8. speak fluently, but make frequent and careless errors?	1 2 3 4 5
9. guess randomly and inaccurately?	1 2 3 4 5
10. reflect a long time over answers?	1 2 3 4 5
11. write lengthy compositions riddled with errors?	1 2 3 4 5
12. turn in written work that is disorganized and/or unsystematic?	1 2 3 4 5
13. tend to get lost in detail when reading?	1 2 3 4 5
14. read word-for-word and refuse to use contextual guessing techniques and inferencing skills?	1 2 3 4 5
15. fail to correct errors that have been previously explained several times?	1 2 3 4 5
16. fail to pay attention to the important details in a listening or reading task?	1 2 3 4 5
17. get easily distracted by irrelevant words and structures?	1 2 3 4 5
18. become easily frustrated when there are unknown elements in a task, making it "too-complicated"?	1 2 3 4 5

19. fail to make pertinent distinctions between syntactic or semantic categories, blurring similar words or structures? 1 2 3 4 5

20. tend to be overly analytical, wanting to create a rule for every example? 1 2 3 4 5

21. have difficulty making generalizations about the structure of the language? 1 2 3 4 5

Error Charts

A technique that should provide important cues to learning difficulties is error analysis. One way to quantify and analyze the type and frequency of a student's linguistic errors on both tests and homework papers is to use an error chart of some type. Brown (1979) has developed an instrument that has been used in analyzing errors in second-year compositions at the University of Nebraska. This instrument is used to help students minimize the recurrence of errors by drawing their attention to the kind of error and its frequency on each composition turned in during the semester. Students count the number of errors on each composition and record them on their charts. By the end of the semester, the number of errors per category should be reduced.

Omaggio has adapted this idea for use in correcting homework and test papers in beginning language classes. (See Figure 2.) Students receive a copy of the error chart at the beginning of each major unit of work during the semester. All errors are coded on daily homework papers in the margins. Students must correct their own errors, using the codes to help them categorize their mistakes and indicate what is wrong. (Of course, the teacher can be consulted if the students cannot discover the correct answers themselves.) Students then record the number of errors per category for each homework assignment, quiz, or test. Before a major unit test, the charts are collected and analyzed to determine which grammatical subjects need to be reviewed and to aid in diagnosing individual learner problems.

A procedure such as this is helpful to the students as well as the teachers: instead of receiving homework papers with massive corrections or quantities of unexplained red circles and underlinings, students get specific feedback on the nature of the linguistic errors they have made in terms of both error type and quantity. The teacher and the students can see at a glance what type of linguistic errors the students tend to commit, and they can keep track of the individual's progress in eliminating them as the semester progresses. Error charts such as these can also provide data that will help the teacher diagnose and classify problems within the categories presented earlier.

Fig. 2. Error Chart

Assig #	1	2	3	4	5	6	Quiz 1				
AC	3	1	1			1	2				
E		2			2		2				
SP			3				3				
GN	3	2		1	1						
NB											
NEG	2					1					
VC	7	6	6	3	5						
ART	4	4	2		1	2	1				
SVA	7	5	2	1			2				
VF			1	1		3					
TN											
MD											
PP											
AA	3	1		1	1	2	1				
POS				2							
DOP											
IOP											
RP											
PRO		1			2	1					
ADV											
PR											
CONJ											
WO		2		1	2	1					
INC											
TOTAL											

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

AC accent missing or wrong
E failure to make elision, or inappropriate elision
SP spelling error
GN gender wrong
NB number wrong--sing/plural
NEG negative wrong, misplaced, missing
VC vocabulary wrong, word choice, missing words
ART article missing, wrong form used, wrong after negative, expression of quantity
SVA subject/verb agreement lacking
VF verb form--stem incorrect
TN tense incorrect
MD mood incorrect (indicative, imperative, or subjunctive)
PP past participle wrong--form or agreement
AA adjective agreement wrong
POS possessive adjective wrong or missing, lacks agreement
IOP indirect object pronoun wrong or missing
RP reflexive pronoun wrong or missing
PRO other pronoun--y or en
ADV adverb wrong or misplaced
PR preposition missing or wrong
CONJ conjunction missing or wrong
WO word order wrong
INC incomprehensible, due to structure or vocabulary choice that makes it difficult to pinpoint the error

Interview Techniques

One diagnostic tool that is invaluable to teachers who have had some training in this area is the individual interview. If well conducted, it can help them identify learning styles with a fair degree of accuracy and make linguistically appropriate judgments. Hosenfeld (1979) has developed an interview procedure in which students are asked to "think aloud" as they perform foreign language tasks.[3] The purpose of the interview is to obtain valid and reliable descriptions of a student's strategies in doing specific learning tasks, and to use this information subsequently to help the student to overcome difficulties. Hosenfeld gives the following guidelines for the most effective interview session:

- Begin each interview with a practice session in self-report procedures, using tasks similar to those you actually intend to use in the interview.
- Distinguish between an incomplete and a complete description of a strategy. There are two kinds of responses, for example, that students should make when doing reading-grammar tasks: what he or she does to perform the grammar operations, and what the student does with the words in the task sentence. In reading tasks, there are also two types of operations: what the student does in reading for the main meaning of the passage, and what he or she does when encountering an unfamiliar word (word-solving strategies).
- There are two types of self-report: introspective and retrospective. Students who think aloud while doing the task at hand are introspecting, while those who describe what they did after the fact are retrospecting. Because the retrospective description is often incomplete, Hosenfeld recommends using introspection, or a combination of the two approaches, depending on the student.
- Ask indirect rather than direct questions so that you don't force students' answers about their strategies into a particular direction. You want to learn what the students' own perceptions of their strategies are rather than impose your own perception on the students.
- Emphasize that you're primarily interested in the steps the students go through to arrive at an answer rather than with the correctness of the answer itself.
- Don't "teach" during the interview. It's important to remember that the purpose of the interview is to perceive the students' strategies; even if they are struggling with the task, do not intervene to help them solve it, thereby interrupting the report of what is being done to arrive at a solution.
- Be sure you and the students understand what is meant by the terms they are using to describe their strategies.
- Look for information about the students' attitude toward the task, their self-concept as foreign language learners, and their theory about language learning.

. Follow the learners and go where they lead you. Allow digressions, because significant information can often be obtained that way.

By using this interview technique, Rosenfeld has begun to discover some important consistencies in the strategies used by learners who are successful at the task as opposed to those used by unsuccessful learners. Her research corroborates the contention of this paper that differences in achievement are often linked to the use of inefficient or ineffective strategies. Many of these strategies are rooted in the problem sources described earlier.

One of the most interesting features of this interview technique is that the students are often able to draw important conclusions about the source of their difficulties by comparing their responses with others who have been more successful at completing the same type of tasks. Their own insights can contribute to the diagnostic process necessary for remediation to begin.

Observation

Teachers should not minimize the usefulness of their intuitions about learner difficulties based on everyday informal observations of students' behavior. Quizzes, tests, homework, classroom participation, and conversations before or after class can often yield information of a diagnostic nature. Rosenfeld's "think aloud" technique can also be used in class to make learners aware of the various strategies available for approaching a given foreign language task and to allow teachers to observe students' behaviors outside the interview context. Sometimes it is fairly easy to diagnose with confidence a learner's problems this way. When the problem is more difficult to pinpoint, however, it would be wise to resort to one or more of the other diagnostic procedures described in this section.

Responding to Learner Needs: Some Classroom Activities

One of the problems with cognitive style research up until recently has been that there has been "an almost total lack of articulation...between the psychological study of cognition, on the one hand, and educational research and practice, on the other" (Kogan 1971, quoted in Claxton and Ralston 1978, p. 9). Birckbichler and Omaggio (1978) have suggested specific remedial activities to address learner problems in specific skill areas, thereby bridging that gap for the foreign language teacher. These remedial activities will be described in the following pages, and examples will be provided in English, French, German, and Spanish. All the activities are easily adaptable to individual tutorial sessions, small-group work, or large-group instruction. In the last-named case, teachers may choose to identify particular problems and incorporate appropriate activities into daily lesson plans.

The language tasks have been arranged in two ways. First, they have been classified according to the nature of the processing demands of the task and are discussed within that framework. (For example, activities 1-18 emphasize the development of analytical skills; tasks 19-27 concentrate on the synthesis of information.) Second, the activities have been classified according to their remedial value: the numbers corresponding to the language tasks have been placed in the activities guide in Figure 3. This guide serves to indicate both the source of the student's problem and the skill area(s) in which it is most evident. (For example, activities 2, 3, 4, 12, 14, 20, 21, 47, 48, and 55 can be used to help students who are field-dependent when doing listening tasks.) Thus, once the teacher has identified the source of the learning problem, he or she simply chooses those activity types from the guide that correspond to it in one or more skill areas.

The classification scheme by which the tasks are organized in the next pages is outlined below:

I. ANALYSIS. These activities require the student to analyze samples of the foreign language and to pay specific attention to linguistic or semantic units--phonemes, morphemes, vocabulary items, phrases, etc. Such tasks might also emphasize judging the meaningfulness of those units.

Figure 3. Activities Guide

Source of Problem	Learning Task					
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Vocabulary	Grammar
Poor Memory	2,3,4,12,20, 22,40,42,49, 51,52,53,54, 55	6,17,18,31, 32,33,40, 42,52,53	2,3,4,7,8, 9,20,40,49, 51,55	5,6,10,19, 31,33,52	3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10,16,19, 32,33,42,46, 52,53,54	2,5,7,8,9,10, 12,19,31,32, 33,42,46,52, 53,54
Lack of Flexibility	28,29,40,47	6,23,24,30, 31,34,35, 36,39,40, 41,42,43,45	28,29,46, 47	6,24,31,33, 35,36,37,38, 39,40,41,43, 44,45,55	6,28,30,33, 39,41,42,43, 46,47	23,24,29,31, 33,34,42,44, 45,46,55
Excessive Impulsiveness	2,3,4,11,12, 14,15,19,20, 48,49,50,55	14,17,18, 31,40,42	2,3,4,7,8, 11,12,13,14, 15,16,20,27, 48,49,50	5,10,14,17, 18,19,25,26, 27,31,40,51, 55	3,4,5,7,8, 10,11,13,14, 15,16,20,26, 42,48,50,51	2,5,7,8,10, 11,12,13,14, 15,17,19,25, 26,31,42
Excessive Reflectiveness/Caution	4,21,28,29, 47,55	23,30,32, 34,41,42, 43	1,4,21,28, 29,46,47	23,41,43	23,28,30,32, 41,42,43,46, 47	23,29,31,32, 34,42,46
Lack of Systematicness/ Organization	2,3,4,11,12, 20,22	6,39,42	2,3,4,7,8, 11,12,16, 20,27,55	5,6,10,20, 25,27,37,38, 39,43,51,55	3,4,5,6,7,8, 10,11,42,43	2,5,7,8,10, 11,12,25,42, 55
Field Dependence	2,3,4,12,14, 20,21,47,48 55		1,2,3,4,12, 13,14,20,21, 25,27,45,46 47,48	5,10,27,45	1,3,4,5,6,8, 10,11,13,14, 46,47,48	2,5,6,8,10, 11,12,13,14, 25,45,46,47
Leveling/Categorization too broad	2,3,11,14,15	6,14	2,3,7,8,9, 11,13,14,15	5,6,10,11, 14	3,6,7,8,9,10 11,13,14,15	2,5,7,8,9,10, 11,13,14,15
Sharpening/Categorization too narrow	2,3,28,29	6,41	2,3,7,8,9, 28,29	6,10,41	3,6,7,8,9,28	2,7,8,9,10, 29
Low Tolerance of Ambiguity	4,15,42,47	23,30,41	1,4,15,46, 47	23,41,46, 47	1,15,23,30, 41,46,47	15,29,46

A. CLUE SEARCHING: Tasks requiring the student to locate certain features of the language and identify them properly.

B. CATEGORIZING/CLUSTERING: Tasks requiring the student to list or otherwise isolate items of a certain grammatical or semantic category.

C. JUDGING MEANINGFULNESS: Tasks requiring the student to judge the meaningfulness or acceptability of an utterance, express an opinion, or evaluate a series of statements.

II. SYNTHESIS. These activities require the student to go beyond analysis to recombine elements of the language and create an organized whole. Tasks include résumés, organizational activities, and integrative language activities.

III. FLEXIBILITY. These tasks require the student to find equivalents, think of paraphrases, expand upon a cue or an idea, or make transformations. They help students increase their flexibility with the language, encourage creativity, and increase fluency.

IV. MAKING INFERENCES. These activities require the student to analyze and synthesize information to make inferences about missing cues or what conclusions can be drawn from certain information.

V. IMPROVING MEMORY. The last set of tasks is designed to help the student expand his capacities for remembering words, phrases, sentences, grammatical features, and ideas in the foreign language.

List of Activities within Classes

I. ANALYSIS

A. CLUE SEARCHING
1. Skimming tasks
2. Syntactic clue searching
3. Semantic clue searching
4. Information search
5. Proofreading

B. CATEGORIZING/CLUSTERING
6. Category listing
7. Card sorting
8. Find odd word

9. Blank is to blank
10. Error categorizing
11. Discrimination tasks
12. Segmenting

C. JUDGING MEANINGFULNESS
13. Reverse semantic cloze
14. Corriger-moi
15. Sentence sense
16. Ranking
17. Either-or questions
18. Agree/disagree

II. SYNTHESIS
19. Dictation
20. Résumé
21. Create a title
22. Strip story
23. Sentence builder
24. Embedding
25. Scrambled sentences
26. Dehydrated sentences
27. Scrambled composition

III. FLEXIBILITY
28. Semantic matching
29. Syntactic matching
30. Oral semantic matching
31. Retell
32. Conversation cards
33. Completion
34. Transformation drills
35. Question expansion
36. Creating with visuals
37. Forced relationship-visuals
38. Picture question and answer
39. Vocabulary: create a context
40. Rose technique
41. Group brainstorming
42. Jigsaw puzzles
43. Be wordy
44. Cue insertion
45. Change the story

IV. MAKING INFERENCES
46. Cloze adaptation
47. Contextual guessing
48. Identifying visuals
49. Inferential identification
50. Logical continuation (receptive)
51. Logical continuation (productive)

V. IMPROVING MEMORY
- 52. Remembering responses
- 53. Memory games
- 54. Did you hear?
- 55. SAADs

I. ANALYSIS

A. Clue Searching

1. SKIMMING TASKS

Task description: Involves the rapid reading of a paragraph or passage to obtain information pertaining to a specific idea or to a list of specific questions. Usually timed.

Remedial value: Skimming tasks encourage the learner who is too reflective or who tends to get lost in detail to learn to focus on the relevant information in a language sample without spending an inordinate amount of time decoding every word. Such tasks increase reading speed while encouraging comprehension of relevant information.

Example (elementary level): Read the following passage in which Patrick talks about his possessions. Skim the passage quickly, listing all the facts you can find that support the two statements below.

1. Patrick aime la musique. (Patrick likes music.)
2. Les autres sont importants dans sa vie. (Other people are important in his life.)

Moi, j'ai...

J'ai des livres et des disques--
...J'ai une chaîne stéréophonique.
J'ai un vélomoteur.
J'ai des plantes et une guitare....
J'ai de la chance.
J'ai un frère et une soeur.
J'ai des parents qui sont formidables....

(Me, I have...

I have books and records--
I have a stereo.
I have a moped.
I have plants and a guitar.
I'm lucky.

I have a brother and a sister.
I have parents who are wonderful.)

Source: Jarvis et al. (1979), pp. 36-37. Technique adapted from Rivers (1975).

2. SYNTACTIC CLUE SEARCHING

Task description: Students underline or tally syntactic units of a given category (such as verb endings or noun markers) in either a reading or a listening passage.

Remedial value: Because this task focuses on recognizing specific grammatical features of the target language, it will help the student who has trouble remembering grammatical forms and structures as well as the student who fails to distinguish between similar forms and structures. The student who is field dependent will profit from this activity because it forces him or her to distinguish relevant from irrelevant details and focus on specified features within a complex language sample. The activity gives students practice in attending to syntactic cues to structure and meaning.

Example: Students hear the following passage read at a "normal" speaking speed and are asked to make a tally mark each time they hear a definite article. (There are ten definite articles in this particular sample.) They may also be asked to keep a subtally of singular vs. plural articles, masculine vs. feminine, or a combination of four sub-tallies (masculine singular, feminine singular, masculine plural, and feminine plural).

Una clase en la universidad consiste de veinticinco a treinta alumnos. Los alumnos están muy interesados. Tienen un profesor muy simpático e inteligente. El profesor Martínez es el mejor profesor de español. Los alumnos son muy afortunados. Algunos alumnos no lo quieren porque da muchos deberes y exámenes. La mayoría de los alumnos aprecian la dedicación de este profesor. Un profesor de español debe ser dedicado para que los alumnos aprendan el idioma.

(A class at the university consists of 25 to 30 students. The students are very interested. They have a very nice, intelligent professor. Professor Martinez is the best Spanish professor. The students are very lucky. Some students don't like him because he gives a lot of homework and exams. The majority of the students appreciate the dedication of this professor. A Spanish professor should be dedicated so that the students will learn the language.)

Source: Minn (1976)

3. SEMANTIC CLUE SEARCHING

Task description: Students underline or tally lexical items of a given category (e.g., descriptive adjectives, adverbs of time and place, medical terms, terms pertaining to education, foods).

Remedial value: As in the syntactic clue-searching technique, this task helps students remember elements of the target language or recognize those elements that belong to a given semantic category. Field-dependent as well as impulsive learners will profit from an activity such as this, because it forces them to distinguish relevant from irrelevant detail and focus on specified vocabulary within a complex language sample.

Example: Identify the vocabulary in the following passage that refers to food.

Endlich bestellt sie Bockwurst mit Kartoffelsalat, ein Glas Coca Cola und eine Portion Schokoladeneis mit Sahne. Das kostet sechs Mark fünfzig. Mit dem Zehnpfennigstück kauft sie ein Stück Spearmint Kaugummi in einem Automat und geht froh nach Hause.

(Finally she orders sausage with potato salad, a glass of Coca Cola, and a helping of chocolate ice cream with cream. That costs six Marks fifty. With the ten-Pfennig-piece she buys a piece of spearmint gum at a machine and goes happily home.)

Source: Technique taken from Minn (1976). Passage from Logan (1976), p. 149.

4. INFORMATION SEARCH

Task description: This activity involves reading or listening to a passage with certain preposed questions in mind. Students are looking for specific information such as departure times in a passage about air travel, specific ingredients needed to make a recipe, or details relating to the time and place an event will occur.

Remedial value: Such tasks encourage the learner who is too reflective or who tends to get lost in detail to learn to focus on the relevant parts of a message. The student who fails to attend to the important cues will become more aware of the amount of information that can be missed by inefficient listening or reading strategies. Listening for specific information also gives students practice in detecting syntactic cues to segmentation of the message (e.g., cues to who, where, when, why, and what).

Example: Students are given the following questions and are

told that the answers to these questions are given in the one-sided telephone conversation they will hear. The conversation is read twice. When students have gotten all the information asked for, they turn over their papers and mark the time. Extra credit is given for rapid completion of the task.

Questions:

1. What is going to happen?
2. Where?
3. What day?
4. What date?
5. What time?
6. What should you bring?
7. What is the teacher's address?
8. What can you do there?

Allô, Marie? Ici Suzanne...Il y a un pique-nique chez notre professeur de français vendredi 12 mai vers six heures du soir ...Alors, apporte ton maillot...D'accord...Son adresse est 295 Avenue des Fleurs. Tu pourras venir? Formidable! A demain!

(Hello, Marie? This is Suzanne...There's going to be a picnic at our French teacher's house on Friday, May 12, around 6:00 at night...Bring your bathing suit...OK...Her address is 295 Flowers Avenue...Will you be able to make it?...Great! See you tomorrow!)

Source: Passage and questions adapted from Linder (1977). Technique adapted from Rivers (1975).

5. PROOFREADING

Task description: Students read through a typed text in which certain common errors have been deliberately inserted. They attempt to find the errors (for instance, spelling, accents, lack of agreement) and correct them. They then check their corrections against an error-free version of the text.

Remedial value: Although some educators believe that students should not be shown incorrect samples of the target language (they maintain that these errors will become difficult to eradicate later), this assumption has never been proven. In fact, many theorists believe that errors can be used in the learning process, and alertness to erroneous forms can be cultivated through the proofreading task described here. Students are asked to focus on details, look for inaccuracies, and otherwise use their "monitor" to advantage. This task is especially useful to students who tend to commit many mechanical errors or who do not attend sufficiently to detail in production tasks.

Example: Can you find the mechanical errors in the following passage? There are missing accents, incorrect spellings, and improper elisions. Try to correct all 35 errors. When you have finished, check your work against the passage given on p. XX of your text.

Que pensent les etudiants quebecois de leur etudes universitaires? Quelles sont leurs ambitoins? Comment imaginent ils leur avenir? Que veulent ils faire dans le vie? Quelles sont leur relations avec leurs parents? Pourquoi etudient ils? Sont ils obliges de travailer? Comment se habillent ils? Quelle est leur attitude au sujet de la amour et du marriage? Que pensent ils de la politique et de la religion?

Pour avoir des reponses a ces questions, un educateur canadienne a organisee un sondage de opinion. Il a interroge mille etudiants et etudiantes de sieze a vingt trois ans. Cette etude a dure dix ans.

Errors:

15 missing accents
7 missing hyphens
3 elision errors
3 agreement errors
4 spelling errors
1 past participle agreement error
1 article gender error

Source: Technique adapted from Rivers (1975). Passage adapted from Jarvis et al. (1979), pp. 261-62.

B. Categorizing/Clustering

6. CATEGORY LISTING

Task description: Students create a list of words that belong to a given category or choose the best category themselves for a list of words. They may also be asked to group words into clusters according to their semantic or syntactic similarities.

Remedial value: Categorization tasks improve students' memory for vocabulary while encouraging them to analyze linguistic units in terms of their common attributes. Students who have trouble seeing relationships within classes of words will profit from categorization tasks.

Examples: A. Choose the best category for the following clusters of words in French:

les petits-pois	près de
les haricots verts	loin de
les carottes	sur
les épinards	devant
[les légumes]	[prépositions de lieu]
(peas	near
green beans	far from
carrots	on
spinach	in front of
[vegetables]	[prepositions of place])

B. Make four (and only four) groups of words from the list given below. Assign a category name to each group you create.

la neige (snow)	le soleil (sun)
la pétanque (bowling game)	le football (football/soccer)
le sac de couchage (sleeping bag)	les planètes (planets)
la lune (moon)	les dents (teeth)
la craie (chalk)	les étoiles (stars)
la montagne (mountain)	la tente (tent)
l'oignon (onion)	les bois (woods)
le tennis (tennis)	la pelote (Basque game)

Students can create a number of categories. Four plausible categories might be white objects, celestial bodies, sports, and camping. Accept any four categories that form a feasible class.

7. CARD SORTING

Task description: Words falling into various syntactic, morphological, or phonological categories are printed or written on notecards. Students sort the cards according to the category to which they belong (foods, clothing, sports, words that sound alike, adjectives, verbs in the imperfect, etc.). Categories can also be subdivided (team/individual sports, summer/winter clothing, verbs in the first person/verbs in the third person, etc.).

Remedial value: Card sorting helps students impose categorical structure on linguistic and semantic units, and discriminate more finely between words of different categories. Working with the cards should also help students memorize the words they are sorting.

Example: Separate the following items into two categories: one pile of cards for "caliente" (hot) and one pile for "frío" (cold).

café (coffee)
ensalada (salad)
arroz (rice)
jugo de naranja
(orange juice)
sopa (soup)
helado (ice cream)
huevos rancheros
(eggs ranch-style)
papas fritas (french fries)
queso (cheese)
pollo frito (fried chicken)

Caliente:
café
arroz
sopa
huevos rancheros
pollo frito
papas fritas

Frío:
ensalada
helado
jugo de naranja
queso

8. FIND ODD WORD

Task description: A short vocabulary list is given to the learner. All the words are related except one. The student's task is to indicate which word does not belong on the list and give the reason why.

Remedial value: Same as for tasks no. 6 and no. 7.

Example: Which word does not belong in each of the groups of four below? Circle the "odd" word in the cluster and explain why you chose it.

A. der Regen (rain)
das Gewitter (thunderstorm)
das Unglück (misfortune)
der Donner (thunder)

B. das Theater (theater)
das Gebäude (building)
die Kirche (church)
der Käfig (cage)

C. der Friseur (hairdresser)
der Vetter (cousin, masc.)
der Großvater (grandfather)
die Kusine (cousin, fem.)

D. breit (broad)
weit (wide)
eng (narrow)
weich (soft)

9. BLANK IS TO BLANK

Task description: Pairs of words that are related in some way (such as antonyms, synonyms, or superordinates) are used in this activity. A third word is given, and students are asked to find an appropriate match.

Remedial value: Students are sensitized to categorical relationships among words in the target language, and memory for vocabulary within semantic or syntactic categories is improved.

Example: Find an appropriate word to complete the relationships given below, as in the model.

Dent:dentiste :: cheveux:?
Dent:dentiste :: cheveux:coiffeur (-euse)

A. pomme:fruit :: pomme de terre:?
carotte:légume :: rôti de boeuf:?
lait:boisson :: gâteau:?

(Apple:fruit :: potato:?
carrot:vegetable :: roast beef:?
milk:drink :: cake:?)

B. près de:loin de :: devant:?
nuit:jour :: lune:?
hiver:été :: automne:?

(near:far from :: in front of:?
night:day :: moon:?
winter:summer :: autumn:?)

10. ERROR CATEGORIZING

Task description: After the teacher has returned a corrected composition, homework assignment, quiz, or test, students are asked to list their mistakes, putting them into such categories as spelling errors, tense errors, vocabulary errors, and the like.

Remedial value: Students are made aware of the type and frequency of their errors and are encouraged to correct them in a systematic way. Once students have isolated those types of errors they commit most often, they are more likely to review the relevant sections of the text that will help them avoid similar errors in their future work.

Example: Using the error chart provided by the teacher (such as the one suggested on p. 14), students correct all the errors committed in each category, listing the correct forms under the category heading. The teacher can suggest specific pages in the text for review or assign activities that give the students practice in the area in which they are experiencing the most difficulty.

11. DISCRIMINATION TASKS

Task description: Students complete a sentence by picking the correct word from a list of words that are similar in form or meaning.

Remedial value: Multiple-choice items of this type encourage students to make fine discriminations between words or structures that they tend to confuse. They force students to focus on detail and choose the correct form in a more reflective manner. When distractors are very similar to the right answer, random guessing is discouraged.

Example:

A. Perdi mi	(I lost my
(1) carretera	(1) highway
(2) caro	(2) expensive
(3) cartera	(3) wallet
(4) corto	(4) short
B. Fui a comprar fruta en el	I went to buy fruit at the
(1) montado	(1) mounted
(2) mercado	(2) market
(3) marcado	(3) marked
(4) mono	(4) monkey
C. La basura se fue con el	The garbage went away with the
(1) verano	(1) summer
(2) veneno	(2) poison
(3) veinte	(3) twenty
(4) viento	(4) wind
D. El perro me	The dog ___ me.
(1) loma	(1) hill
(2) loro	(2) parrot
(3) lame	(3) licks
(4) lima	(4) file)

12. SEGMENTING

Task description: This activity involves listening to or reading sentences and isolating their component parts. The task may be to identify the actor, the object, or the action in each sentence. At a more advanced level, learners may be required to identify main or subordinate clauses, e.g., relative or conditional clauses.

Remedial value: When processing speech or written language, it is important for the listener or reader to be able to perceive meaningful segments of the total message in order to see the relationships of the parts to each other and to the whole. Segmenting activities help learners attend to cues to syntactic function and thereby increase their abilities to comprehend the message fully.

Example: Identify the direct object in the following sentences:

A. Ich habe die Zeitung gekauft. (I bought the newspaper.)

B. Meiner Mutter habe ich die Zeitung gegeben.
(I gave the newspaper to my mother.)

C. In der Zeitung hat meine Mutter eine Reklame gefunden.
(My mother found an advertisement in the newspaper.)

D. Meine Mutter zeigte meinem Vater diese Reklame.
(My mother showed this advertisement to my father.)

E. Mein Vater ist aber böse geworden--er will keine Reise nach Newark, New Jersey machen!
(But my father got angry--he doesn't want to make a trip to Newark, New Jersey!)

F. Meine Mutter ist jetzt sehr traurig--seit langer Zeit will sie den weltberühmten Tiergarten in Newark sehen.
(My mother is very sad now--she has wanted to see the world-famous zoo in Newark for a long time.)

G. "Warum dorthin gehen wenn du einfach ein Buch darüber lesen kannst?" sagte mein Vater.
("Why go there when you can simply read a book about it?" my father said.)

Source: Technique adapted from Rivers (1975).

C. Judging Meaningfulness

13. REVERSE SEMANTIC CLOZE

Task description: Students are given a passage in which extraneous words have been inserted. Their task is to cross out the words that do not belong.

Remedial value: This task forces students to focus on detail and make important discriminations between similar words and structures in the target language. It will help the impulsive learner who fails to attend to details as well as the broad categorizer who does not make important discriminations. Students must attend to meaning in order to locate the extraneous words.

Example:

Gestern bin ich ins Kino gegangen. Ich sah soll einen Film von Fassbinder. Der Film war wirklich sehr grün gut und Montag gehe

ich du ihn wieder zu sehen. Jetzt kostet es viel ins mit Kino zu gehen. Hoffentlich wird meine Mutter das Salz Geld geben. Wie du weißt kommst, bin ich nur Oberschüler. Für mich ist es nicht einfach seelisch Geld zu kriegen.

(Yesterday I went to the movies. I saw should a film by Fassbinder. The film was really very green good and Monday I you am going to see it again. Now it costs a lot to go to with the movies. Hopefully my mother will give me the salt money. As you know come, I am only a high school student. It is not easy emotional for me to get money.)

14. CORRIGEZ-MOI (Correct Me)

Task description: The teacher reads a story, paragraph, or sentence containing inappropriate words whose meanings could be confused with the appropriate contextual meaning. As students listen, they are asked to notice the inappropriate word and suggest a substitution.

Remedial value: This activity encourages aural discrimination and processing of a message for meaning. It should help students to "fine-tune" their ear and indirectly encourage them to perfect their own pronunciation.

Example: The teacher reads the following text. A point is awarded to each student who notices an inappropriate word and is able to give the appropriate substitute with correct pronunciation. In the sample text below, incorrect words are italicized, and correct words are given in parentheses.

Un jour je me promenais dans la *roue* (rue) en vélo. J'avais *femme* (faim) et je n'avais rien *boue* (bu) depuis le matin. *Au-dessous* (au-dessus) le soleil brillait dans le ciel bleu et le vent *d'eau* (doux) de l'automne me caressait les *jeux* (joues). Les feuilles *jeunes* (jaunes) tombaient des *sables* (arbres) le long de la route....

(One day I was riding in the *wheel* (street) on my bike. I had a *woman* (I was hungry) and I hadn't *any mud* (eaten anything) since morning. *Below* (above) the sun was shining in the blue sky and the *watery* (gentle) autumn breeze was caressing my *games* (cheeks). The *young* (yellow) leaves were falling from the *sands* (trees) along the road....)

Source: Rivers (1975), p. 72.

15. SENTENCE SENSE

Task description: In this activity, the student's task is to judge whether or not an orally presented or written sentence is

meaningful. If the senterce is not meaningful, the student changes it so that it makes sense. It is good to include some correct sentences among those that are nonsensical, so that a response set is not established.

Remedial value: This task encourages students to make fine discriminations between similar words and to process the sentence meaningfully. It encourages the student who is too impulsive to reflect more carefully on all the parts of the message and forces the broad categorizer to make pertinent distinctions among similar words and structures.

Example: The following sample sentences in German are all faulty. The teacher should intersperse some meaningful sentences among those given below.

A. Als Student habe ich viele Füsse zu lesen.
(As a student, I have many feet to read.)

B. Meine Wohnung ist im dritten Apfel dieses Wohnhauses.
(My apartment is on the third apple of this apartment building.)

C. Um fünfundsechzig Uhr hat Karl eine Biologieklasse.
(At sixty-five o'clock Karl has a biology class.)

D. Zum Frühstuck hast du Brot, Marmelade und zwei Hundeier gegessen.
(For breakfast you ate bread, jam and two dog eggs.)

E. Es war so kalt, daß ich den Tisch zumachen mußte.
(It was so cold that I had to close the table.)

F. Die auf dem Mann stehende Ecke ist mein Vater.
(The corner standing on the man is my father.)

G. Meine Schwester kochte das Fleisch im Kühlschrank.
(My sister cooked the meat in the refrigerator.)

16. RANKING

Task description: Students create or are given a list of related vocabulary (e.g., foods, animals, gifts) and are asked to rank them according to their personal preferences.

Remedial value: In addition to affording students the opportunity to express their likes and dislikes or make judgments, this activity can have two effects on their memory for vocabulary: (1) it can increase their recognition knowledge of vocabulary they have studied, and (2) it can promote recall of

important vocabulary if they are asked to make up their own lists.

The activity can also promote comprehension of complete sentences or paragraphs, if the items to be ranked consist of entire sentences stating alternative events that could happen or courses of action to be taken. In order to rank-order such a list of sentences, students will have to process them for meaning, paying attention to all relevant details, and remembering the whole idea represented by each sentence.

Example:

A. List of vocabulary to be ranked according to preference:

Rank order from 1 to 10 your preference for the following items you might receive as a gift:

_____ une guitare (a guitar)
_____ une motocyclette (a motorcycle)
_____ une montre (a watch)
_____ une bague (a ring)
_____ une chaîne stéréophonique (a stereo)
_____ un livre (a book)
_____ un chat (a cat)
_____ des vêtements (clothing)
_____ un petit chien (a puppy)
_____ une perruque (a wig)

As a follow up, students can discuss how they ranked these items and why; they might get into small groups and compare rankings or arrive at a group consensus on the top five gifts.

Source: Boylan and Omaggio (1981)

B. Perdez-vous souvent patience? Classez les événements suivants du plus irritant (1) au moins irritant (10).

Je perds patience quand...

_____ J'attends un coup de téléphone toute la soirée et la personne ne me téléphone pas.
_____ Mes amis (amies) ne rendent pas les choses qu'ils (elles) empruntent.
_____ Un ami (une amie) ne répond pas à mes lettres.
_____ J'entends des mensonges à propos de ma famille.
_____ Je perds mes cartes de crédit dans le bus.
_____ Je paie dix dollars pour un objet et on vend la même chose pour huit dollars le lendemain.
_____ J'ai envie d'avoir une conversation avec un(e) ami(e) et il (elle) ne me dit rien du tout.

_____ Les gens me rendent visite sans téléphoner d'abord.
_____ J'attends des heures et la personne n'arrive pas.

(Do you lose patience easily? Rank the following events from the most annoying (1) to the least annoying (10).

I lose patience when...

_____ I wait for a phone call all evening and the person never calls.
_____ My friends don't give back the things they borrow.
_____ A friend doesn't answer my letters.
_____ I hear lies about my family.
_____ I lose my credit cards on the bus.
_____ I pay ten dollars for something and they sell it the next day for eight dollars.
_____ I want to talk to a friend and he/she doesn't say anything at all.
_____ People come visit me without calling first.
_____ I wait hours for someone and they don't come.)

Source: Omaggio (1981)

17. EITHER-OR QUESTIONS (Forced Choice)

Task description: The class is given questions (orally or in writing) in which two or three alternative answers are provided. Their task is to choose the best answer.

Remedial value: In addition to encouraging students to process the sentence and its alternative answers for meaning, this task gives the impulsive student an opportunity to think over the best answer and the inflexible student a choice of answers. Students with poor memory, who might not be able to come up with an original answer for lack of vocabulary, are more comfortable with this task.

Example: Vive les vacances!

A. En général, est-ce que tu préfères voyager avec des amis ou avec tes parents?

B. Est-ce que tu préfères aller à la ville ou à la campagne?

C. Est-ce que tu aimes mieux aller à l'hôtel ou faire du camping?

D. Est-ce que tu préfères voyager en été ou en hiver?

E. Est-ce que tu préfères visiter la France ou le Canada?

(Long live vacations!
A. In general, do you prefer travelling with friends or with your parents?
B. Do you prefer going to the city or to the country?
C. Do you prefer staying in a hotel or going camping?
D. Do you prefer going in the summer or in winter?
E. Do you prefer visiting France or Canada?)

Source: Adapted from Jarvis et al. (1979), p. 84.

Example: In the following example, the choice is between adjectives, adverbs, verbs, nouns, etc. that suggest a complete idea. Students should be asked to explain their choices.

A quoi ressemblez-vous le plus?
...à New York ou au Colorado?
...à une rose ou à une marguerite?
...à l'été ou à l'hiver?
...à une tortue ou à un lièvre?
...à "demain" ou à "hier"?
...à "ici" ou à "là-bas"?
...au "froid" ou au "chaud"?

(What are you most like?
...New York or Colorado?
...a rose or a daisy?
...summer or winter?
...a tortoise or a hare?
...tomorrow or yesterday?
...here or there?
...cold or hot?)

Source: Technique adapted from Simon, Howe and Kirschenbaum (1972).

18. AGREE/DISAGREE

Task description: Students are asked to agree or disagree with a given statement. If they disagree, they reword the statement so that it represents their own ideas.

Remedial value: This task encourages students to process each statement for meaning and to analyze each part of the statement in terms of its "truth value." This helps learners who have difficulty focusing on detail. It will encourage impulsive learners to read or listen to each statement carefully and reflect a little longer on it. Students who have difficulty remembering words and structures are more comfortable working with these statements, since most of the vocabulary and grammar they will need are provided for them.

Examples:

A. Por lo general, los estudiantes nunca están cansados.

B. El profesor trabaja mucho, pero los estudiantes trabajan más.

C. Los estudiantes nunca se interesan en los problemas de la comunidad.

D. La energía nuclear no es ningún problema.

E. No tenemos que preocuparnos por la contaminación aquí porque hace mucho viento.

F. La mujer debe estar en casa y cuidar a los niños.

G. El hombre solamente debe cuidar el hogar.

(A. Generally, students are never tired.
B. The teacher works a lot, but the students work more.
C. Students are never interested in community problems.
D. Nuclear energy isn't any problem.
E. We do not have to worry about pollution here because it is very windy.
F. Women should stay home and take care of the children.
G. Men should only take care of the home.)

II. SYNTHESIS

19. DICTATION

Task description: Students write sentences dictated to them by the teacher or on tape.

Remedial value: Many foreign language educators believe that dictation has multiple value for language learners because it is essentially an integrative or global skills task. A student who does well on dictation is able to remember correct spelling, recall or recognize vocabulary, recall or recognize morphological and syntactic information, and make legitimate inferences when reconstructing the dictated message on paper. Dictation involves not only listening comprehension skills, but reading and writing skills as well. It is also a "real-world" activity, as skill in taking down directions, notes, or messages is often useful.

Example: Some learning theorists and foreign language specialists maintain that the most useful type of dictation is one

that is contextualized--that is, it follows a theme throughout the dictated sentences and "hangs together." Variations on dictation abound: partial dictation, in which students receive a cloze passage and are requested to fill in the missing words as the dictation is read; dictation of questions to which students are requested to write answers; dictation of parts of a conversation, after which students are asked to attempt to reconstruct the other half, using their knowledge of the context and of the language; dictation of directions, after which students draw a pathway on a map provided with the dictation; and the like. A sample "thematic" dictation is given below. For dictation to be a true task of integrative skills, the students should not have had an opportunity to study the dictated passage beforehand.

A. Le matin, je me réveille de bonne heure d'habitude.

B. Je me lève lentement parce que j'ai toujours envie de rester au lit.

C. Ma soeur se lave les cheveux chaque matin.

D. Elle passe des heures dans la salle de bain!

E. Nous nous dépêchons pour ne pas manquer le bus.

(A. In the morning I usually wake up early.
B. I get up slowly because I always want to stay in bed.
C. My sister washes her hair every morning.
D. She's busy in the bathroom for hours!
E. We hurry so we don't miss the bus.)

20. RÉSUMÉ

Task description: After reading or listening to a passage in the second language, class members write a short résumé or summary of the content. This summary can be in the native language (making this a relatively pure test of listening or reading skill), or it can be in the target language, making the task a combination of aural/writing or reading/writing skills.

Remedial value: Writing a résumé requires the learners to pay attention to the relevant details of a reading or listening passage, synthesize and summarize the various elements to make a meaningful and coherent whole, and create an organized and succinct summary statement. Learning the art of writing a good résumé will help the learner whose memory needs strengthening as well as encourage the field-dependent learner to choose the relevant details and the impulsive student to attend carefully to meaning.

21. CREATE A TITLE

Task description: Learners are given several titles from which they choose the one that best summarizes the reading or listening passage. They can also be asked to create a title or titles on their own, or write a short moral to a story in the second language.

Remedial value: Like the résumé, this task forces students to integrate the various elements of the message into a coherent whole.

Example: The story in German is about two shoemakers who are selling shoes in the marketplace. One is selling his shoes for half the price the other shoemaker is charging. The shoemaker who is selling shoes at the more expensive price asks his colleague how he can sell his wares so cheaply, adding that even though he steals the leather for the shoes he makes, he still has to charge one Taler to break even. The second shoemaker replies that he doesn't steal the leather--he steals the shoes!

Students are asked to choose the best title for the story from the options given in German: (A) Ein Taler für ein Paar (One Taler for a Pair); (B) Zwei Schuhmacher (Two Shoemakers); (C) Wie man billige Preise haben kann (How One Can Charge Inexpensive Prices); (D) Create a title of your own!

Source: Story taken from Zobel (1971), p. 1.

22. STRIP STORY

Task description: Each student in a small group (four or five) is given in random order a sentence from a story and is asked to memorize the sentence without letting anyone else see it. Each student tells the group his or her sentence; the group members then try to reconstruct the story.

Remedial value: Like the scrambled composition, this activity has an organizational value--students must analyze each of the parts of the story and integrate them into an organized and meaningful whole. Other remedial benefits include strengthening memory for sentences and complete ideas in the target language, increasing global listening comprehension skills, and encouraging attention to relevant detail. If the students are given their part of the story in the native language or are given the elements of the story to paraphrase without memorization, the activity can also encourage the development of speaking skills as well as vocabulary and structure recall.

Example: Any short story or passage can be cut into strips and

distributed to students. The following text is an English résumé of a nineteenth-century Spanish story, Los deseos. The sentences from the story are scrambled randomly below to illustrate how each student's contribution must be analyzed and integrated into an orderly narrative. Sentences can be written on cards, either in Spanish, or in English to be rendered by the student into Spanish.

Later that evening, the couple's attention again turns to their neighbors.

The last wish is used in removing the sausage, leaving the couple where they began.

This is the story of a poor, elderly rural couple who sit by their fireplace and wish for the possessions of their neighbors.

The angry husband curses his wife, and the sausage becomes a part of her nose.

Suddenly a Fairy Godmother appears and offers to grant them any three wishes they want, saying she will appear the next morning.

The wife covets a large sausage that her neighbor had that day, and it appears in their home.

They inadvertently use up all their wishes.

Source: Technique described in Gibson. Story résumé appears in Boylan and Omaggio (1981).

23. SENTENCE BUILDER

Task description: Students create original sentences by combining words or phrases from different columns. Sometimes the words have to be changed to assure that subjects and verbs, nouns and adjectives, etc. agree.

Remedial value: Students who lack flexibility and have difficulty creating novel sentences will be more comfortable with this task. The task also forces students to think over possible alternatives and pay attention to the syntactic and morphological features of the sentences they create.

Example: Create original sentences, using one expression from each column. Your sentences can be serious or humorous.

Sample sentence: La femme qui porte un chapeau melon vend des timbres. (The woman who is wearing a bowler hat is selling stamps.)

I	II	III	IV
La femme	regarder un journal	acheter	avion
L'homme	porter un chapeau melon	entrer dans	carnet de tickets
Le pilote	promener son chien	perdre	compartiment
L'employé	avoir mal à l'estomac	regarder	sac
L'agent de police	porter une moustache	vérifier	wagon-lit
Les passagers	prendre deux places	piloter	passeport
L'hôtesse de l'air	perdre ses lunettes	vendre	timbres
			billets
			valises
(The woman	look at the newspaper	buy	airplane
The man	wear a bowler hat	enter [into]	book of tickets
The pilot	walk his/her dog	lose	compartment
The employee	have a stomach ache	look at	handbag
The policeman	have a mustache	verify	sleeping car
The passengers	take two seats	fly (a plane)	passport
The stewardess	lose his/her glasses	sell	stamps
			tickets
			suitcases)

24. EMBEDDING

Task description: Students are given short sentences and are asked to add clauses, adjectives, adverbs, etc., to make the sentence progressively longer and more complex. A variation involves giving students two or more sentences that are to be rewritten into one complex sentence.

Remedial value: This task shows students how to expand upon an idea, using appropriate syntactic structures. It encourages the inflexible student to be more creative and provides cues as to how that creativity can be achieved.

Example: Jean-Claude a écrit une rédaction en français, mais ses phrases sont trop simples et courtes. Voilà quelques phrases de sa composition à refaire. Liez les phrases avec le pronom relatif qui.

A. Ce weekend je sors avec une Américaine. Elle aime les comédies.
B. Elle veut voir un film. Le film commence samedi soir.
C. Le cinéma n'est pas loin. Le cinéma est dans l'Avenue Rousseau.
D. Le film raconte l'histoire d'Albert. Albert est journaliste.
E. Sa femme travaille dur. Sa femme est pompier.
F. Un jour il y a une incendie dans la poubelle. La poubelle est dans le bureau du patron d'Albert.

G. Albert téléphone à sa femme. Sa femme arrive tout de suite.
H. Le patron a déjà éteint le feu. Le patron a versé son café dans la poubelle.
I. La femme-pompier a arrosé le directeur avec son tuyau. Elle est venue pour rien.
J. Le journal a publié l'histoire le lendemain à la une. Le journal cherche les histoires à sensation.

(Jean-Claude wrote a composition in French, but his sentences are too simple and short. Here are a few sentences from his composition to redo. Link the sentences with the relative pronoun qui.

A. This weekend I'm going out with an American woman. She likes comedies.
B. She wants to see a film. The film starts Saturday evening.
C. The theater isn't far. The theater is on Rousseau Avenue.
D. The film tells the story of Albert. Albert is a newspaper reporter.
E. His wife works hard. His wife is a firefighter.
F. One day there's a fire in the wastebasket. The wastebasket is in the office belonging to Albert's boss.
G. Albert calls his wife. She arrives right away.
H. The boss has already put out the fire. The boss dumped his coffee into the wastebasket.
I. The firefighter squirted the director with her hose. She had come for nothing.
J. The newspaper published the story the next day on page one. The newspaper looks for sensational stories.)

25. SCRAMBLED SENTENCES

Task description: Words in each sentence are scrambled, and the student's task is to put them into their proper syntactic order.

Remedial value: Students who are too impulsive while writing need to analyze each word in the sentence while doing this task. Students who are inattentive to subject-verb agreement, adjective agreement, adverb placement, and the like, should profit from such a task.

Example: Unscramble the following sentences, making any necessary changes and additions.

A. Ich/ die/ gekauft/ Zeitung/ habe.
(I/ the/ bought/ newspaper/ have.)

B. habe/ meiner/ gegeben/ Zeitung/ Mutter/ ich/ die.
(have/ to my/ given/ newspaper/ mother/ I/ the.)

C. In/ gefunden/ der/ Reklame/ Zeitung/ eine/ hat/ Mutter/ meine.
(In/ found/ the/ advertisement/ newspaper/ a/ has/ mother/ my.)

D. Meine/ Reklame/ Mutter/ diese/ zeigte/ Vater/ meinem.
(My/ advertisement/ mother/ this/ showed/ father/ to my.)

E. Nach/ er/ keine/ Newark/ will/ machen/ Reise.
(To/ he/ no/ Newark/ wants/ to make/ trip.)

F. Seit/ sehen/ Langer/ in Newark/ Zeit/ Tiergarten/ will/ weltberühmten/ sie/ den.
(Since/ to see/ a long/ in Newark/ time/ zoological gardens/ has wanted/ world-renowned/ she/ the.)

G. Du/ lesen/ einfach/ kannst/ Buch/ ein/ darüber.
(You/ read/ simply/ can/ book/ a/ about it.)

26. DEHYDRATED SENTENCES

Task description: Students are given the parts of a sentence and are asked to fill out the rest of it, adding proper function words and making all necessary changes to assure subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, and the like.

Remedial value: The remedial value is the same as for the sentence builder task, although the creative aspects of the sentence builder are not present here.

Example: Quand? (When?) François Lenoir is talking about when various things occur or will occur in his family. Reconstruct his statements.

Modèle: Lundi prochain/ ce/ être/ l'anniversaire/ de/ soeur
Lundi prochain c'est l'anniversaire de ma soeur.

(Model: Next Monday/ it/ to be/ birthday/ of/ sister
Next Monday it's my sister's birthday.)

A. Dimanche/ nous/ aller/ toujours/ chez nos cousins
(Sunday/ we/ to go/ always/ our cousins' house.)

B. Nous/ être/ toujours/ à Nice/ mois d'août
(We/ to be/ always/ in Nice/ month of August.)

C. Lundi/ je/ avoir/ examen important
(Monday/ I/ to have/ important exam.)

Source: Jarvis et al. (1979), p. 78.

27. SCRAMBLED COMPOSITION

Task description: This task is much like scrambled sentences, but whole sentences, not words, need to be reordered into a meaningful and coherent paragraph. It is the written counterpart to the strip story. The paragraph can be based on a story already read (which differentiates this task from the strip story, where the story has not been heard before). Students' own compositions can be used for this activity.

Remedial value: This activity has an organizational value--students must analyze and process meaningfully each individual sentence in order to decide where each belongs in the total story. The activity increases global reading skills and encourages attention to relevant detail.

Example: Recombine the following sentences into a meaningful paragraph. The first and the last sentences are given.

Es cierto que el refrán español dice que "perro que ladra no muerde."

Pepito entró en la casa como una flecha, fue adonde estaba el antipático intruso y le mordió una pierna. Entre los perros que ha tenido mi familia recuerdo a Pepito...un simpático chihuahua que ladraba mucho y, cada vez que tenía la oportunidad, también mordía. Inmediatamente mamá puso a Pepito en el patio y le dió un poco de agua para calmarlo. Un día vino un hombre de la compañía de teléfonos a investigar un problema que teníamos en la extensión de mi papá. Aunque era un animal muy pequeño, hacía tanto ruido que el pobre hombre se puso muy nervioso. Cuando Pepito le vió empezó a ladrar como un loco. Unos minutos más tarde, accidentalmente, mi hermanito abrió la puerta del patio. Afortunadamente sus pequeños dientes no penetraron el fuerte material de los pantalones. Pero también hay otro refrán que dice "no hay regla sin excepción."

Desde este incidente mi mamá dejó de creer en refranes.

(It is true that the Spanish proverb says that a "dog that barks doesn't bite."

Pepito shot into the house like a bullet, went where the horrible intruder was, and bit his leg. Among the dogs that my family has had I remember Pepito...a cute chihuahua that used to bark a lot and, each time he got a chance, he also bit. Mother immediately put Pepito outside in the yard and gave him some water to calm him down. One day a telephone man came to see about a problem we were having with my father's extension. Although he was a very small animal, he made so much noise that

the poor man got very nervous. When Pepito saw him he started to bark like crazy. Several minutes later, my little brother accidentally opened the door. Fortunately his little teeth didn't pierce the pants' strong material. But there is also another proverb that says "there is no rule without an exception."

Since this incident my mother stopped believing proverbs.)

Source: Lamadrid, Bull and Briscoe (1974), p. 377

III. FLEXIBILITY

28. SEMANTIC MATCHING

Task description: Two columns of sentences are given to the students. In Column A, a set of sentences is presented; equivalent or near-equivalent sentences are then chosen from Column B.

Remedial value: The student who lacks flexibility needs to learn that there are several ways to get the same basic idea across in the foreign language. Recognizing equivalencies is the first step in learning to be more flexible in production tasks.

Example: Choose the sentence in Column B that means about the same thing as each sentence in Column A.

A	B
1. Ich habe Berlin gern.	1. Der Skandal läßt Ilse kalt.
2. Ilse ärgert sich über den Skandal.	2. Der Herbert ist ein aufgeweckter Junge!
3. Das Auto kostet wenig.	3. Ilse ist böse über den Skandal.
4. Herbert ist aber dumm!	4. Preiswert ist das Auto zwar nicht.
	5. Berlin gefällt mir.
	6. Das Auto ist billig.
	7. Ich hasse Berlin.
	8. Herbert ist kein Genie!

A	B
1. I like Berlin.	1. The scandal leaves Ilse cold.
2. Ilse is angry about the scandal.	2. Herbert is a bright boy!
	3. Ilse is mad about the scandal.

3. The car costs little.

4. Herbert is so dumb!

4. The car is no bargain.
5. I'm pleased with Berlin.
6. The car is cheap.
7. I hate Berlin.
8. Herbert is no genius!)

29. SYNTACTIC MATCHING

Task description: This activity operates in the same way as semantic matching, except the focus is on grammatical transformations and equivalencies.

Remedial value: Syntactic matching tasks alert the student to the syntactic functions of sentence segments appearing in different grammatical constructions and encourage flexibility in production tasks.

Example: Trouvez une phrase équivalente ou presque équivalente dans la Colonne B pour chaque phrase de la Colonne A.

(Choose the sentence in Column B that means about the same thing as each sentence in Column A.)

A	B
On vendra la maison à côté de chez nous.	Le toit sera réparé dans quelques jours.
On a réparé le toît et quelques fenêtres récemment.	Les murs ont été peints pendant notre temps libre.
On peindrait les murs si on avait le temps.	Quelques réparations ont été faites le mois passé.
	La maison de nos voisins sera vendue bientôt.
	La maison de nos amis est vendue.
	Les murs seraients peints s'il y avait assez de temps.

A	B
(They're going to sell the house next to us.	The roof will be repaired in a few days.
They repaired the roof and several windows recently.	The walls were painted during our free time.
We would paint the walls if we had the time.	Some repairs were made last month.
	Our neighbor's house will be sold soon.
	Our neighbor's house is sold.
	The walls would be painted if there were enough time.)

30. ORAL SEMANTIC MATCHING

Task description: This activity is very similar to semantic matching except that the focus is on recognizing equivalents in the aural mode. Student A has a list of sentences that he reads to his partner. The partner has a list of sentences that are equivalent in meaning or that match logically, but that are arranged in a different order. As Student A reads aloud his sentences, Student B reads aloud the sentence from his list with the equivalent meaning.

Remedial value: Same as for semantic matching, plus the additional practice in speaking and listening comprehension.

Example:

A	B
1. Tengo un abrigo oscuro que me gusta muchísimo.	1. Llovió toda la noche y nevó esta mañana.
2. Los pantalones están limpios.	2. No tiene dinero.
3. Hace mucho frío hoy día.	3. Es el negro con los botones dorados.
4. El es muy pobre.	4. Ella siempre ha sido flaca.
5. Me gustaría ver la televisión.	5. Lavé la ropa ayer.
6. No le gusta comer.	6. Hay un buen programa esta noche.

A	B
(1. I have a dark coat that I like very much.	1. It rained all night and it snowed this morning.
2. The pants are clean.	2. He hasn't any money.
3. It is very cold today.	3. It's the black one with the gold buttons.
4. He's very poor.	4. She has always been skinny.
5. I'd like to watch television.	5. I washed my clothes yesterday.
6. She doesn't like to eat.	6. There is a good program on tonight.)

31. RETELL

Task description: Students take a message either in person or on the phone for someone else. Their task is to transmit that message as accurately as possible to a third party.

Remedial value: This task should help students whose memory needs strengthening, by forcing them to remember the relevant portions of a message long enough to write it down or repeat it to someone else. Students who have trouble manipulating lan-

guage forms should profit from this task, which requires that all the verbs be changed from the first person to the third person or from direct to indirect speech. Students must pay attention to detail in order to get the message straight.

Example: Students are to imagine they are living with a German family, the Schmidts, and the phone rings. No one else is home, so the student must answer the phone and take down the message to give to Frau Schmidt on her return. Here is the text of the message:

Ich bin die Nachbarin, Frau Müller. Ich wollte Frau Schmidt sprechen. Würden Sie ihr bitte sagen, daß ich morgen um 8 Uhr vorbeikomme und dann können wir zusammen einkaufen gehen.

(I am the neighbor, Mrs. Muller. I wanted to speak to Mrs. Schmidt. Would you please tell her that I will come by tomorrow at 8 o'clock and then we can go shopping together.)

Source: Schulz and Bartz (1975), p. 85.

32. CONVERSATION CARDS

Task description: Pairs of learners are given cards on which interview questions have been written in either the native language or the target language. Each partner asks the questions on his card in turn. Students may be requested to take notes on their partner's responses. Each partner has different but related questions.

Remedial value: Students get both speaking and listening practice in this nonthreatening interview situation. If the questions on the cards are indirect or given in English, students must use their knowledge of the language to phrase the question so that their partner can answer. Manipulation of tenses, persons, adjectives, etc., can be worked into the cards, requiring students to pay attention to detail and think carefully about how they form their questions and answers.

Example:

Ask your partner...	Card 1
what sport he/she likes if he/she plays basketball if he/she prefers skiing or golf if he/she plays tennis	

Ask your partner... Card 2

if he/she is athletic
if he/she likes basketball
if he/she plays golf
if he/she prefers tennis or football

Source: Bonin and Birckbichler (1976)

A variation on this activity involves issuing a third card to a third student in the group, whose responsibility will be that of "checker." This student has the appropriate form of the question that each of the partners will be asking, and will correct or help each of the others when they experience difficulty or make an error. In this way, students get immediate feedback from a peer about the correctness of their question formulation.

Card 1 (STUDENT 3)

1. Quel sport aimez-vous (aimes-tu)?
2. Aimez-vous jouer au basketball? (Aimes-tu...?)
3. Préférez-vous faire du ski ou jouer au golf? (Préfères-tu...?)
4. Jouez-vous au tennis? (Joues-tu au tennis?)

Card 2

1. Etes-vous sportif (sportive)? (Es-tu sportif?)
2. Aimez-vous le basketball? (Aimes-tu...?)
3. Jouez-vous au golf? (Joues-tu...?)
4. Préférez-vous le tennis ou le football? (Préfères-tu...?)

33. COMPLETION

Task description: Students complete a sentence or paragraph in a logical or meaningful way.

Remedial value: This task encourages students to use the vocabulary and structures they have learned to express personal preferences or opinions, or to just enjoy "playing" with the language. Because the exercise is open-ended, it encourages divergent thinking.

Example: The following activity is structured around reflexive verbs in German. Encourage students to think of multiple possibilities to complete each sentence.

A. Ich schäme mich über.... (I'm ashamed of....
B. Ich beeile mich wenn.... (I hurry when....)
C. Ich amüsiere mich wenn.... (I have a good time when....)
D. Ich ärgere mich weil.... (I get angry because....)
E. Ich kümmere mich um.... (I care about....)
F. Ich freue mich auf.... (I'm looking forward to....)
G. Ich interessiere mich für.... (I'm interested in....)

34. TRANSFORMATION DRILLS

Task description: These grammatical exercises require students to make transformations, substitutions, and the like. They can be assigned to students working alone or in small groups.

Remedial value: Transformation drills increase flexibility with grammatical forms and semantic units. They can be found in abundance in almost every language textbook.

35. QUESTION EXPANSION

Task description: Given a question (e.g., "Do you like sports?"), students create additional questions relating to the same topic: ("What's your favorite sport? Do you like to watch sports on TV? Do you prefer team or individual sports? What do you think of the winter Olympics?")

Remedial value: This task encourages learners to ask the same thing in a variety of ways or to carry on a conversation on a given topic. The learner who lacks flexibility, imagination, or who is normally reticent is encouraged to think divergently.

Example: Think of at least five related questions for each of those given below.

A. Pourquoi étudiez-vous à cette université?
(Why are you studying at this university?)

B. Aimez-vous vos professeurs?
(Do you like your professors?)

C. Aimez-vous voir des films?
(Do you like to see films?

D. Comment vous amusez-vous d'habitude?
(How do you usually have a good time?)

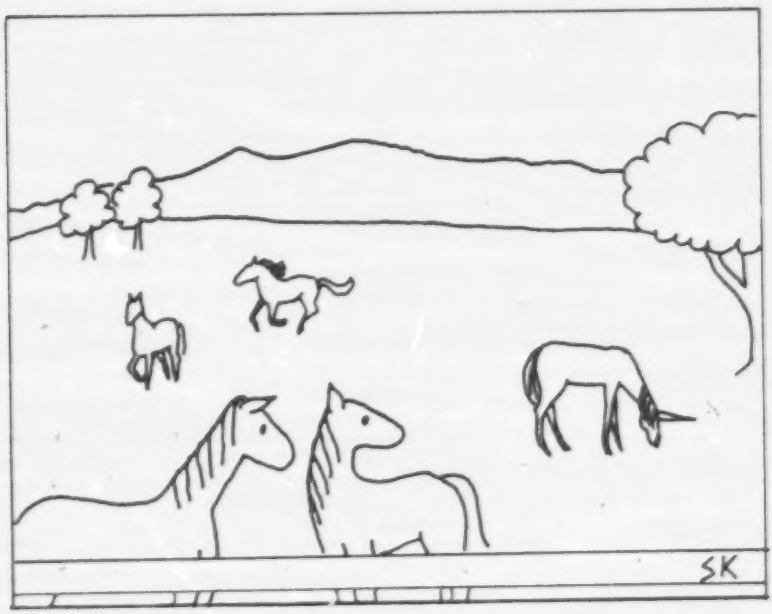
Students can take the questions they have made up for each topic and begin a conversation with a partner. They will probably discover that the way the first question is answered will determine which question to ask next, and may want to revise the related questions as the conversation takes place.

36. CREATING WITH VISUALS

Task description: Learners create original captions or dialogues for one cartoon or a series of cartoons taken from a magazine or newspaper. They might also be asked to create a composition based on a series of visuals or cartoons.

Remedial value: This activity encourages divergent thinking and creative use of the second language.

Example: Students create one or more captions and/or a dialogue to go with the cartoon below. Some possible captions are given in German.



A. Das muß wohl ein Zugereister sein.
(Must be from out of state.)

B. Na, ich glaube ich könnte mich daran gewöhnen.
(Well, I suppose I could get used to it.)

C. Der soll sechs Fremdsprachen sprechen.
(I hear he speaks six foreign languages.)

37. FORCED RELATIONSHIP-VISUALS

Task description: Students are shown two unrelated pictures that are chosen randomly from magazines or other sources. They have to think of a story that will relate the two pictures. They may write a group composition (groups of two to four learners) or individual stories. Stories can then be presented to other class members orally.

Remedial value: Same as for creating with visuals

38. PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

Task description: A picture is chosen from a magazine or other source and attached to a sheet of colored paper. A sheet of lined notepaper is attached with a clip to the back. The picture is passed around a small group, and each person writes a question in the target language that the picture raises in his or her mind. After all the group members have written their questions, the picture and the attached list of questions are passed to another group, which has been creating questions for its own (different) picture. The groups then create a story that will answer all the questions posed.

Remedial value: This activity encourages creative behavior in two ways: (1) it has the value of the question expansion exercise described earlier (no. 35), and (2) it encourages students to think divergently and produce a written composition through synthesis of the various elements brought out in the questions about the picture. Creating a story that will account for all aspects of the situation encourages organized problem-solving behavior. Writing a group composition will also require listening and speaking skills.

39. VOCABULARY: CREATE A CONTEXT

Task description: Students are given a short list of idioms or vocabulary and create an original story or paragraph using all the words on the list. They may do this task alone or in a group.

Remedial value: In addition to encouraging divergent thinking and creative use of the language, this task provides an active vocabulary review as well.

Example: Students are given the following list of words to incorporate into a story of their own creation. The story below represents one student's effort.

Oiga!	el camarero	la jaula
risueño -a	la hija	el pájaro
asomarse	el papá	el sillón
costar trabajo	el apoderado	las gafas
de pronto		el tejado
(Say, listen, look here!	waiter	cage
smiling, cheerful	daughter	bird
to look/lean out of a window/door	father	easy chair
to be very difficult	attorney	eyeglasses
suddenly		roof)

El papa dijo a la hija "Oiga! hija mía, asomese a la ventana y vea el apoderado que la he escojido como novio." La niña miró a la calle y quería solamente ver el camarero que ella adoraba. De pronto el apoderado la vió y la costó trabajo estar risueña. Se dió vuelta y vió su papa sentado en el sillon, puesto sus gafas y leyendo el periodico. Que pena tenía la niña y lloraba mientras veía el pajaro en la jaula en el tejado de la casa vecina.

(The father told his daughter, "Look here, my daughter, look out the window and look at the attorney I have chosen as your groom." The girl looked at the street and only wanted to see the waiter she adored. Suddenly the attorney saw her, and it was very difficult for her to be cheerful. She turned around and saw her father sitting in the easy chair, with his glasses on, reading the paper. How sad the girl was, and she cried as she saw the bird in the cage on the roof of the neighboring house.)

40. "ROSE" TECHNIQUE

Task description: Students are placed in pairs or in larger groups and provided with a blank piece of paper. They must listen as their partner or the group leader describes a picture (the teacher can provide the picture or students can choose their own) and try to draw a rough duplicate according to the description they hear.

Remedial value: Both listeners and speakers must focus on detail and pay careful attention to a description in order to accomplish a task. Students who lack flexibility will need to develop skill in paraphrasing, or describing a feature of the stimulus material in several ways. Learners who are too impulsive will need to think carefully about their description so that their partner can produce an accurate duplicate. The task also encourages the development of vocabulary and can be used to emphasize correct usage of specific grammatical structure (prepositions of place, for example).

41. GROUP BRAINSTORMING

Task description: Brainstorming is the name Osborn (1953) gave to his technique for stimulating creativity, but the term has become so popular that it is used to refer to many kinds of creative activities. It is essentially a group task in which a problem is defined and the group sets about finding as many solutions as possible. Some "brainstorming" activities for foreign language learning are described below.

Remedial value: These tasks encourage divergent thinking, reflectiveness, and, in many cases, organized problem-solving behavior. Depending on the nature of the task assigned, students can improve their control of vocabulary and structure in the target language.

Examples:

A. Paraphrasing: Students are given a set of stimulus statements and asked to come up with as many possible ways to paraphrase them as they can.

Jean-Pierre est malheureux aujourd'hui.	(Jean-Pierre is unhappy today.)
Il n'est pas heureux.	(He's not happy.)
Il est triste.	(He's sad.)
Il ne saute pas de joie.	(He's not jumping for joy.)
Il est mécontent.	(He's discontent.)

B. Ideational fluency: Students write the names of all the things they can think of that fit relatively broad classes (e.g., "white" and "edible"). The group is given two 3 x 5 cards randomly chosen from a deck of descriptive categories and then produces as many examples as possible of things fitting both categories.

C. List consequences: An unusual event is proposed, and the group comes up with as many possible consequences as they can think of.

D. Utility test: The group tries to think of all possible uses for a common object (for example, a brick, a chair, or a knife), stressing innovative alternatives.

E. List attributes: The group lists all the attributes of a common object, describing it as completely as possible.

42. JIGSAW PUZZLES

Task description: Groups of four or five learners are given

cards, each with a word or a picture of a common object on it. Each person describes the word or object in the foreign language to the others in the group without actually using it. When all students have described their word successfully, the students take the first letter of each and see what new word the letters spell. (Puzzle parts may also depict objects in a room; in this case, when all the words have been guessed, the group decides which room of the house has been described. Many other variations on this model are possible. (See source for ideas.)

Remedial value: This task encourages the development of paraphrasing skills and flexibility. It also reviews vocabulary and grammar, and provides a realistic stimulus for listening and speaking practice.

Example:

Imagen	(image)
Gracia	(grace)
Luz	(light)
Esperanza	(hope)
Santo	(saint)
Infierno	(hell)
Adiós	(goodbye)
IGLESIA	(church)

Source: Omaggio (1976), pp. 131-33.

43. BE WORDY

Task description: A topic sentence or a series of topic sentences is given, and class members fill out the rest of the paragraph.

Remedial value: This task encourages the development of organizational skills as well as flexible and divergent thinking.

Example:

A. Die Tür steht offen. Wo alles früher sehr ordentlich war, liegt jetzt alles durcheinander. Plötzlich...

(The door is open. Where earlier everything was very much in order, now everything is in great confusion. Suddenly...)

B. Gestern hatte ich eine schreckliche Ahnung! Ich wußte, daß heute nichts Gutes geschehen könnte. Aber heute...

(Yesterday I had a horrible foreboding! I knew nothing good could happen today. But today...).

C. Doch jetzt bin ich sicher, daß mein Bruder wirklich dumm ist! Heute morgen als die ganze Familie frühstückte...

(Now I'm really sure that my brother is dumb! This morning when the entire family was eating breakfast...)

44. CUE INSERTION

Task description: Students expand each sentence of their original compositions by adding more information. (They can expand the information that is already in the paragraph or add descriptive and elaborative words or phrases.) The teacher may want to insert appropriate cue words within the text of the composition to serve as a guide.

Remedial value: For the reflective student who produces skimpy compositions, this task gives guidance as to what can be elaborated upon and where.

Example: Voilà une histoire assez ennuyante que Paul a racontée sur son voyage. Comment pouvez-vous l'embellir afin de la rendre plus intéressante? Chaque fois que vous voyez un astérisque, ajoutez une proposition relative. Utilisez votre imagination. Vous pouvez être sérieux ou amusant dans le choix des détails que vous ajoutez.

Exemple: Paul a écrit: "J'ai passé mes vacances dans un hôtel."*
Embellissements possibles:
J'ai passé mes vacances dans un hôtel...
qui est très mystérieux.
dont les habitants sont vieux.
où des gens célèbres habitent.
que mon frère a suggéré.
où j'ai vu des spectres!

Voice l'histoire de Paul:

J'ai passé mes vacances dans un hôtel.* L'hôtel est situé dans une petite rue.* Le concierge* ne dit jamais rien. Il parle seulement à sa femme.* Leur jardin* est très tranquille et donne sur la rue. Je reste souvent sur un banc à regarder les gens.*

Ma chambre* est très confortable. Dans un coin, il y a une grande armoire.* Le lit* est près de la fenêtre. Quelquefois j'écoute les gens* dans la rue.

L'autre jour j'ai reçu une lettre.* Mon ancien ami Jacques* vient me rendre visite. Sa femme* vient aussi. Peut-être que nous irons à ce restaurant près d'ici.*

(Here's a rather boring story Paul told about his trip. How

can you embellish it to make it more interesting? Each time you see an asterisk, add a relative clause. Use your imagination. You can be serious or funny in your choice of added detail.

Example. Paul wrote, "I spent my vacation in a hotel."
Possible embellishments:
I spent my vacation in a hotel...
which is really mysterious.
whose inhabitants are old.
where famous people live.
that my brother recommended.
where I saw ghosts!

Here's Paul's story:
I spent my vacation in a hotel*. The hotel is located on a little street*. The concierge* is really quiet. He only talks to his wife*. Their garden* is very tranquil and looks out on the street. I often sit on a bench* and look at the people.
My room* is quite comfortable. In the corner there is a big wardrobe*. The bed* is near the window. Sometimes I listen to the people* in the street.
The other day I received a letter*. My old friend Jacques* is coming to visit me. His wife* is coming too. Maybe we will go to this restaurant nearby*.)

Source: Omaggio (1981)

45. CHANGE THE STORY

Task description: Students are given a narrative and are asked to create a new point of view or change the story in some way. The task can be done individually or in small groups.

Remedial value: This activity provides a structured creative exercise that encourages divergent thinking as well as written and/or oral practice in the target language.

Example: Suggestions are based on the story "Los deseos" (see p. 39).

A. Point of view: We have read the narrative from the point of view of an outside observer. However, each character in it probably saw things from a different perspective. Pick one of the characters and retell the story from his or her point of view, i.e., the Fairy Godmother, the neighbors, the man, or the woman.

B. New ending: If the second wish had been different, the story

might have ended in quite another way. Retell the story, substituting a different second wish and creating a new ending.

Source: Boylan and Omaggio (1981)

IV. MAKING INFERENCES

46. CLOZE ADAPTATION

Task description: Students fill in the blanks of a paragraph by choosing from given options or by providing appropriate words from memory. The words are deleted for their grammatical or semantic value, rather than randomly as in the cloze procedure.

Remedial value: This activity promotes the use of inferencing skills, careful reading comprehension, and attention to details of meaning as well as form.

Example: (Cloze passage where direct or indirect object pronouns must be inserted.)

Dans un hôtel, à Paris, vous trouvez un document dans l'armoire. Ce document est très ancien et difficile à lire. Remplacez les mots qui sont effacés en utilisant un pronom d'objet indirect ou direct, selon le cas.

(In a hotel in Paris you find a document in the wardrobe. The document is very old and difficult to read. Replace the words that are erased, using a direct or indirect object pronoun, whichever is appropriate.)

UN TESTAMENT L'an un Thermidor

A ma femme Isabelle, je donne la moitié de mon argent. Je _____ donne tout cela parce qu'elle _____'a bien servi comme femme et camarade pendant ma vie. L'autre moitié de mon argent je donne à mes enfants. Je _____ demande seulement de _____ dépenser lentement et avec délibération. Ils _____ 'ont obéi, et ils _____ ont montré, à ma femme et à moi, leur amour et leur affection, à l'exception de Bernard, qui _____ 'a toujours montré peu de respect, mais qui _____ ressemble le plus. Je ____ ai prêté toutes mes cravates: il peut _____ garder! Quant à ma cousine Michelle, je _____ donne mon chat Hector et mon oiseau Fifi parce qu'elle va _____ montrer beaucoup d'affection et ____ donner à manger sans oublier.

A mon ami et mon avocat, Marcel Renaud, qui _____ 'a bien servi pendant ma vie, je _____ rends l'argent que je _____ dois.

Victor Martel

(LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT Year one, Thermidor

To my wife Isabelle, I give half of my fortune. I'm giving _____ all of that because she served _____ well as wife and friend during my life. The other half of my money, I will to my children. I ask _____ only to spend _____ slowly and with deliberation. They obeyed _____, and they showed _____, my wife and me, their love and their affection, except for Bernard, who always showed _____ very little respect, but who resembles _____ the most. I lent _____ all my ties. He can keep _____! As for my cousin Michelle, I give _____ my cat Hector and my bird Fifi because she will show _____ lots of affection and feed _____ without forgetting.

To my friend and lawyer, Marcel Renaud, who served _____ well during my life, I return to _____ the money that I owe _____.

Victor Martel)

47. CONTEXTUAL GUESSING

Task description: A paragraph is provided in which new vocabulary has been underlined. Learners must try to guess the meaning of each new word from the context. A related task uses nonsense words instead of new vocabulary. The student must find the nonsense words and replace them with appropriate vocabulary.

Remedial value: This task helps students improve contextual guessing skills while providing an interesting passage with which to work. If nonsense words are used, they should be constructed so that they conform to the rules of the morphological structure of the target language.

Example: Ayer por la tarde a eso de las cuatro, me fuí en mi gófano banglote a ver a Pedro. La gófana fladez de Pedro había crecido tanto que no la reconocí. Conversé con Pedro una hora y cuando salí su gófana fladez plausumía un pescado en mi banglote. ¡Imagínense! Mi gófano banglote no es ningún sitio para plausumir un pescado y pesc para una fladez que plausume. Pedro se tipitió tanto que creo que la fladez nunca más plausumirá en ningún banglote.

(Yesterday afternoon around four, I went in my schwitzy trippit to see Peter. His schwitzy grutchen had grown so much that I didn't recognize it. I spoke with Peter for an hour, and when I left his schwitzy grutchen was drutzing a fish in my trippit. Imagine! My schwitzy trippit is no place to drutz a fish and even worse for a grutchen to drutz. Peter got so frimped that I think the grutchen will never drutz in my trippit again.)

48. IDENTIFYING VISUALS

Task description: Students are asked to identify an object or scene described orally or in writing by choosing the appropriate visual from a selection of two or more pictures. They may also put visuals in the order established by a paragraph that they read or hear.

Remedial value: In order to make the appropriate choice, the learner must be able to make fine discriminations in either listening or reading comprehension, paying attention to relevant details.

Example: *[Each of these sentences corresponds to one in a series of pictures of a village under varying weather conditions and at different times of day.]*

A. Estaba en la selva cerca de un pueblo. (3)
(I was in the jungle near a village.)

B. Miraba desde lejos con un amigo. (5)
(I looked from a distance with a friend.)

C. Apareció una tormenta feroz y fuimos al pueblo buscando amparo. (8)
(A terrible storm came and we went to the village looking for shelter.)

D. Llovió todo el día y toda la noche. (1)
(It rained all day and all night.)

E. El río inundió el pueblo. (6)
(The river flooded the village.)

F. Pobre gente, muchas casas fueron destruidas. (7)
(Poor people! Many houses were destroyed.)

G. La tormenta se disipó en media mañana. (4)
(The storm was over by mid-morning.)

H. El sol brillaba pero había mucho que arreglar. (2)
(The sun was shining, but there was a lot to fix.)

49. INFERENTIAL IDENTIFICATION

Task description: The learner is asked to identify which character from a dialogue, short story or play might have made a certain statement. The actual statement is not made in the original text but reflects the character's personality.

Remedial value: In order to identify the appropriate character, students must have focused on the relevant aspects of his or her personality. Such a task requires the student to comprehend the passage and to be able to synthesize the information.

Example: Daniel va a la universidad a pie

Frank: ¡Hola Daniel! ¿Por qué vienes a pie? ¿Y tu motocicleta?
Daniel: La dejé en casa. Ayer tuve un problema con la policía.
Frank: ¡No me digas! Cuéntame lo que pasó.
Daniel: Cuando yo venía por la Avenida Central, al llegar a la Calle Veinte, no vi la luz roja y un policía me paró.
Frank: ¿Qué le dijiste?
Daniel: ¿Qué le iba a decir? No me di cuenta que la luz había cambiado. El policía me pidió la licencia. La busqué en todos los bolsillos pero no la tenía.
Frank: ¡Caramba! De veras que eso es tener mala pata.
Daniel: Bueno que voy a hacer...el mes pasado tuve varios problemas también. Ahora por el resto del mes voy a tener que venir a la universidad a pie.
Frank: ¡No te preocupes! Esas cosas le pasan a todo el mundo.

(Identify which character would have made the following statements:

1. ¿Es tu primera violación de tráfico?
2. Le dejé en la cartera en los pantalones que llevaba puestos anoche.
3. ¡Caramba! Me suspendieron la licencia de manejar.
4. ¡Cuanto lo siento!
5. Vas a tener que tener más cuidado.
6. Me duelen los pies.

(Daniel walks to the university

Frank: Hi, Daniel. Why are you walking? What about your motorcycle?
Daniel: I left it at home. I had a problem with the police yesterday.
Frank: You don't say. Tell me what happened!
Daniel: When I was coming on Central Avenue, as I came to 20th Street I didn't see the red light and a policeman stopped me.
Frank: What did you tell him?
Daniel: What was I supposed to tell him? I didn't realize the light had changed. The policeman asked me for my license. I looked for it in all my pockets but I didn't have it.
Frank: Oh, no! That's really bad luck!

Daniel: Well, what am I to do...Last month I had several problems also. Now for the rest of the month I have to walk to the university.
Frank: Don't worry! These things happen to everyone.

Identify which character would have said the following:

1. Is this your first traffic ticket?
2. I left my wallet in the pants I was wearing last night.
3. Darn it! They suspended my driver's license.
4. I'm so sorry!
5. You will have to be more careful.
6. My feet hurt.)

Source: Lamadrid, Bull and Briscoe (1974), p. E72

50. LOGICAL CONTINUATION (RECEPTIVE)

Task description: Students are given a pair of sentences either orally or in writing and are asked to indicate whether or not the second sentence follows logically from the first.

Remedial value: Increases inferencing skills and requires comprehension of all the parts of the utterance. The impulsive learner will need to reflect before answering in order to do this task well.

Example:

NO: A. 1) In der Nähe gibt es ein gutes Restaurant.
(In the area, there is a good restaurant.)
2) Dort schaue ich mir oft Filme an.
(I go there often to see films.)

B. 1) Montags hat Helga keine Klassen.
(Mondays Helga has no classes.)
2) Heute ist Montag und Helga kommt zu spät zu ihrer Englischstunde. (Today is Monday and Helga is late for her English class.)

C. 1) Als ich jung war, wohnte ich in Hamburg.
(When I was young, I lived in Hamburg.)
2) Freitag gehe ich zum ersten Mal nach Hamburg.
(Friday I'm going to Hamburg for the first time.)

YES: D. 1) Mittwoch gehe ich nie ins Kino.
(I never go to the movies on Wednesdays.)
2) Mittwoch bleibe ich zu Hause um ein Buch zu lesen.
(Wednesdays I stay home to read a book.)

E. 1) Gestern konnte Heinrich nicht schlafen.
(Yesterday Heinrich couldn't sleep.)
2) Heute ist der arme Heinrich todmüde.
(Today poor Heinrich is dead tired.)

F. 1) Spanisch studiere ich gern.
(I like to study Spanish.)
2) Ich freue mich auf meine Spanischstunde.
(I'm looking forward to my Spanish class.)

51. LOGICAL CONTINUATION (Productive)

Task description: After reading a statement or a paragraph, learners produce a sentence that logically follows what they have read.

Remedial value: This task requires analysis and comprehension of the details of the stimulus passage. It has the additional value of encouraging creative and/or divergent thinking and all the benefits of creative writing exercises.

Example: Créez une phrase complète en français pour conclure chacun des paragraphes suivants.

A. Claude est une fille très superstitieuse. Elle lit son horoscope tous les jours. Elle pense que son avenir sera déterminé par le sort, et elle n'aime pas faire des projets à l'avance.

B. Louis essaie beaucoup d'imaginer son avenir. Il pense que l'avenir est un produit de ses actions, et il veut beaucoup influencer la société un jour.

(Create a complete sentence in French to conclude each of the following paragraphs.

A. Claude is a superstitious person. She reads her horoscope every day. She thinks that her future will be determined by fate, and she doesn't like to make plans in advance.

B. Louis tries to imagine his future a lot. He thinks that the future is a product of his actions, and he wants very much to have an influence on society someday.)

V. IMPROVING MEMORY

52. REMEMBERING RESPONSES

Task description: After students have answered a series of questions based on the themes and structures of the lesson, mem-

bers of the class are asked to recall some of the responses that were given.

Remedial value: This task uses the content of students' own output to strengthen memory for vocabulary and structures in the foreign language. Task requirements also include transformation of language forms, as students restate each other's answers in the third person.

Example: Using an interview format, students ask each other personal questions based on the theme and structures of the lesson. They then tell other class members what their partners said.

A. Personal questions:
   1) Qu'est-ce que tu as l'intention de faire cet après-midi?
   2) Quand tu as faim, qu'est-ce que tu aimes manger?
   3) Quand tu as soif, aimes-tu boire du vin?

B. Report:
   1) Brigitte a l'intention d'aller au cinéma.
   2) Quand elle a faim, elle aime manger des fruits.
   3) Quand elle a soif, elle préfère l'eau minérale.

C. Remembering:
   1) Où Brigitte a-t-elle l'intention d'aller cet après-midi?
   2) Qui aime manger les fruits--Brigitte ou Jean-Michel?
   3) Qu'est-ce que Paul aime boire quand il a soif?

(A. Personal questions:
   1) What do you intend to do this afternoon?
   2) When you're hungry, what do you like to eat?
   3) When you're thirsty, do you like to drink wine?

B. Report:
   1) Brigitte intends to go to the movies.
   2) When she's hungry, she likes to eat fruit.
   3) When she's thirsty, she prefers mineral water.

C. Remembering:
   1) Where does Brigitte intend to go this afternoon?
   2) Who likes to eat fruit--Brigitte or Jean-Michel?
   3) What does Paul like to drink when he's thirsty?)

Source: Boylan and Omaggio (1981)

53. MEMORY GAMES

Task description: Memory games can focus on vocabulary and/or structures. Typical memory games include chain sentences or stories, whisper-down-the-lane (telephone), etc.

Remedial value: When the game requires students to recognize vocabulary, recall vocabulary, or restate facts in the foreign language, it reinforces their memory for these words and grammatical features.

Examples: For many examples of vocabulary and structure games, as well as games of other types, see Omaggio (1979).

54. DID YOU HEAR?

Task description: Students listen to a short narrative. They then hear a series of sentences, some of which were in the text and others that were not. Their task is to separate the sentences they did hear from the ones they did not hear.

Remedial value: This task helps the student whose memory needs improvement by providing listening comprehension practice coupled with immediate recognition practice as a follow-up activity. It helps the student separate the narrative into its component parts, which is essential in developing attentive listening skills.

Example: C'est le premier avril. Il est huit heures moins cinq. Marie-Lise est à l'école. Elle est à sa place au troisième rang. Devant elle il y a son amie, Anne-Marie. La classe va bientôt commencer. Marie-Lise sort de sa poche un petit poisson. Tout doucement elle l'attache au tablier d'Anne-Marie.

Which of the following sentences did you hear in the passage? Make a check mark next to each sentence you did hear. Leave all sentences not heard in the passage unmarked.

A. C'est le premier avril.
B. Le professeur est dans la salle de classe.
C. Il est huit heures moins cinq.
D. Devant Marie-Lise est son amie, Anne-Marie.
E. Marie-Lise étudie son anglais.
F. La classe va bientôt commencer.
G. Marie-Lise sort quelque chose de sa poche.
H. Anne-Marie pousse un cri d'horreur.
I. Le professeur pose une question à Anne-Marie.

(It's April 1st. It's five minutes to eight. Marie-Lise is at school. She's in her seat in the third row. In front of her is her friend Anne-Marie. The class will start soon. Marie-Lise takes a little fish out of her pocket. She attaches it very carefully to Anne-Marie's apron.

A. It's April 1st.
B. The professor is in the classroom.
C. It's five minutes to eight.
D. In front of Marie-Lise is her friend Anne-Marie.
E. Marie-Lise is studying her English.
F. The class will start soon.
G. Marie-Lise takes something out of her pocket.
H. Anne-Marie screams in horror.
I. The teacher asks Anne-Marie a question.)

Source: Rivers (1975)

55. SAADs

Task description: Students reduce what they have heard in a listening passage to a series of simple active affirmative declarative sentences; that is, they recode the message for processing in long-term memory by reducing it to its most basic and easily stored components. All grammatical relations are thus reduced to subject-verb-object, making the sentences easier to retrieve from memory.

Remedial value: Recoding activities help students transform information in the foreign language into the most easily retrievable form. The task demands that students get the gist of the message without necessarily remembering exact wording. A certain amount of the information in the original message will be dropped, but peripheral detail should not be the focus of the activity. Students cannct be expected to extract and retain more from the foreign language text than they would from a native-language passage, and research indicates that most people remember less than one-third of all possible information in a given listening passage in their own language.

Example: After listening to the passage, students write down in SAADs the essential content.

J'aimerais vous raconter l'histoire curieuse de ma première journée a Paris. D'abord il faut savoir que c'était la première fois que ma belle-soeur et moi étions en France, et, naturellement, il y avait un tas de choses que nous ne savions pas encore. En tout cas, nous étions en train de traverser une rue où il y avait, comme toujours, beaucoup de circulation, quand, tout à coup, un gros camion s'est arrêté tout court afin de nous laisser passer. Ma belle-soeur, qui voulait remercier le chauffeur, a fait un geste comme on aurait fait aux Etats-Unis dans la même situation--une simple inclination de la tête et un sourire pour dire "Merci!" Mais tout d'un coup, le chauffeur

est descendu de son camion, l'a laissé dans la rue, et a commencé à nous suivre partout dans les rues de Paris! Nous ne savions que faire!

If asked what the passage was about, the student might come up with several basic facts, expressed in SAADs:

A. L'histoire se passe à Paris.
B. C'était la première fois que l'auteur était en France.
C. L'auteur était avec sa belle-soeur.
D. Elles traversaient une rue.
E. Il y avait beaucoup de circulation, etc.

(I would like to tell you the strange story of my first day in Paris. First you have to know that it was the first time my sister-in-law and I were in France, and naturally, there were a whole lot of things we didn't know yet. In any case, we were crossing a very busy street when, all of a sudden, a big truck stopped short to let us pass. My sister-in-law, who wanted to thank the driver, made a gesture like one would have made in the same situation in the United States--she nodded her head and smiled to say "Thanks!" But suddenly the driver got out of his truck, left it in the street, and started to follow us everywhere through the streets of Paris! We didn't know what to do!

A. The story takes place in Paris.
B. It was the first time the author was in France.
C. The author was with her sister-in-law.
D. They were crossing a street.
E. There was a lot of traffic, etc.)

* * *

The approach described in this paper has several advantages for the classroom teacher who wants to teach responsively. Some of the most important are:

. Adaptability. The activities described in the preceding pages can be used in both structured and unstructured settings with individuals, small groups, or whole-class instruction.

. Ease of preparation. With relatively little modification, many exercises, reading passages, and dialogues can be adapted for remedial purposes using the models presented in this paper.

. Manageability. The same materials can be used as a basis for a wide variety of learning activities that respond to the differing needs of students in the classroom. For example, the student who is an impulsive reader can search for specific cues

in a reading passage, while another person who has trouble reading rapidly can skim the same passage for the general idea.

. Specificity of purpose. When teachers are able to specify the purpose of a given learning task and isolate the cognitive demands of each assignment, they will be able to assign tasks to individual learners that are geared to their needs. This approach helps teachers identify the problems learners are experiencing and specify remedial tasks that will help them overcome their difficulties.

Educators have been saying for a long time that we must respond to the needs and preferences of individual students. These suggestions constitute one viable, practical way to achieve this very important goal.

NOTES

1. For a thorough discussion of models of cognitive style, see Abraham (1978), and Claxton and Ralston (1978).

2. A good review of five commonly used inventories can be found in Lepke (1978).

3. See Rosenfeld for an excellent discussion of this interview technique and a case study in which it has been used.

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